

HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY LETTERS

GEORGE III. AND THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

THE BEGINNINGS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

**HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY
LETTERS.**

THE YOUTH OF HENRY VIII.

**THE GIRLHOOD OF QUEEN
ELIZABETH.**

**ELIZABETH AND MARY STUART: THE
BEGINNING OF THE FEUD.**

THE FALL OF MARY STUART.

**LETTERS OF LITERARY MEN: SIR
THOMAS MORE TO ROBERT BURNS.**

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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.**

**THE GREAT WORLD WAR: A HISTORY.
9 vols.**

GEORGE III. AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION:

THE BEGINNINGS

BY

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Fellow of the Royal Historical Society



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TO
NORAH

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PREFACE

MUCH has been said and printed since the Great War on the need of re-writing the history of Anglo-American relations from the new viewpoint created by the sacrifices shared by each English-speaking nation in that world catastrophe. In the critical days of 1917, when members of the American Mission sat down with the British War Cabinet at No. 10, Downing Street, to take counsel together against the common enemy—in the room and at the table where the Treaty of Peace with the United States Republic had been signed nearly a century and a half before—there were grounds for hoping that the old partisan text-books, which no fair-minded historian could possibly accept to-day, would have ceased their traditional task of inoculating new generations with the obsolete prejudices of the old. It would seem, however, that much still remains to be done before the mists and misunderstandings have been swept from the story of Anglo-American relations in the past, especially with regard to the American Revolution. "The fact is," admits Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger, of the University of Iowa, "that the average American still accepts without qualification or question the partisan justifications of the struggle for independence which have come down from the actual participants in the affair on the American side. . . . Indeed, many Americans of the present generation, who readily admit that there is much to be said for the southern side in the Civil War, condemn as unpatriotic any effort to consider the origins of the War for Independence from a standpoint of scientific historical detachment."¹

We are told that this conception of patriotism is undergoing revision, America having learnt from Germany the

¹ "New Viewpoints in American History" (The Macmillan Company, 1922).

danger of teaching propaganda in the guise of history ; and that the new school of American historians has accomplished a great deal in its efforts to bring a broader vision to bear on the whole subject ; but the results of its researches are too often buried, as Professor Schlesinger elsewhere points out, in the files of the various historical society journals, in the learned publications of the universities, and in monographs privately printed at the expense of the authors. " The new history was being written by historians for historians, rather than for laymen ; and the public generally has remained oblivious of the great revolution in our knowledge of American history wrought by the research specialists."

If British prejudices have survived in the same way—though we have good reason to doubt this—it has not been the fault of modern British historians. Trevelyan, Green, Goldwin Smith, and others have all told the truth about the American Revolution, not only without national bias, but with a generosity to opponents which has long been reflected in the leading text-books on the subject in British schools. Lord Morley states the modern British view in the quotation which has been inscribed on the pedestal of Burke's statue unveiled in Washington in 1922 : " The War of Independence was virtually a second English Civil War. The ruin of the American cause would have been also the ruin of the cause in England. Burke's attitude in this great contest is that part of his history about the majesty and noble wisdom of which there can be least dispute." The Burke statue, presented, with busts of Lord Chatham and Lord Bryce, to the American people by Sir Charles Wakefield, treasurer of the Sulgrave Institution, and the statue of Washington which now stands in front of the National Gallery in London, as well as the bust of Washington in St. Paul's Cathedral—both gifts from Americans to this country—bear witness to the growth of this saner view that the American Revolution was not so much a quarrel between two peoples as between two Governments ; a quarrel which not only gave birth to the independence of the United States, but also determined the future of the British Empire. " Things could not be otherwise," as

Burke said, " than that Englishmen beyond the seas should claim the full rights of Englishmen."

How it was that the voice of Burke, as well as of Chatham and other English champions of the rights of the colonists, was unavailing in a Parliament of " King's Friends " and placemen, who little thought that a day would dawn when descendants of these same colonists would come marching through London in their tens of thousands as comrades-in-arms of sons of the old Motherland in a later fight for freedom, will be seen in the following pages. The present work does not profess to furnish the historian with much new material, though certain of the letters are now printed for the first time. It is simply an attempt to illustrate the character and times of George III. and the early years of his reign, and re-tell the story of the American Revolution through its first phase, by the method which I have adopted in earlier volumes in my series of " History in Contemporary Letters "—allowing the leading actors in the drama to state their case as far as possible in their own words.

The record will, it is hoped, be completed in a subsequent volume, and some day, perhaps, fall into its place in the series in which it is proposed to illustrate the whole course of English history. Whether such a method may be profitably applied to a period so prolific in its correspondence as the eighteenth century, I must leave to the judgment of others. To my mind these letters invest the story of the American Revolution, as well as contemporary affairs in the Motherland, with a vivid human interest which only those who had lived and moved among the scenes depicted could impart. Letters written with no view to publication, as Stuart Reid said in quoting from the correspondence of the Duke of Marlborough, " are like unsuspected doors which, when opened, throw new light on the pages of history." Though most of the correspondence now brought together from many different sources may be familiar to practised historians, much of it will be new to most British readers, who, to tell the truth, know comparatively little of American history, notwithstanding the noble library of scholarly works on the subject. American readers who, according to Lord Bryce,

know the history of their country better than the English know that of England, will, it is hoped, find in the present compilation, with its impartial selection of witnesses both for and against, something of service towards that better understanding between the two great English-speaking peoples which is the chief hope for the future peace of the world.

Most of the portraits now printed have been selected from the collection in the National Portrait Gallery. The portrait of the 3rd Earl of Bute is in the possession of the Earl of Wharncliffe and is reproduced by his permission from "Historical Portraits," Fletcher and Walker (Oxford University Press, 1919).

Acknowledgments are due to the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office for permission to reprint the letters now selected from the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission; to Mr. Murray for extracts from the following books which he publishes: "Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox," edited by the Countess of Ilchester and Lord Stavordale; and "Autobiography and Political Correspondence of the 3rd Duke of Grafton," edited by Sir W. R. Anson; to Mr. Lewis Melville for the text of the letter from Princess Charlotte to Frederick the Great, from his life of "Farmer George," published by Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons; Professor Hosmer for a brief letter from his life of "Samuel Adams," published by David Douglas; and Messrs. Putnam for the letter quoted from W. Farrand Livingston's life of "Israel Putnam." My indebtedness to the works of other authors has, I hope, been made sufficiently clear in the course of the following narrative.

July 4th, 1923.

FRANK A. MUMBY.

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Add. MSS. British Museum.

Dartmouth MSS. Historical MSS. Commission.

MSS. of Miss M. Eyre Matcham. Historical MSS. Commission.

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Correspondence of Chatham. 1838-40.

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edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford.)

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GEORGE III. AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III.

“ George, be King ! ”—Bolingbroke’s “ Idea of a Patriot King ”—The First Speech from the Throne—The New King’s Aims and Personality—Pitt Slighted—England’s Supremacy—Corrupt Politics—Legge Dismissed for Barrington—Bute Enters the Cabinet—The King’s Love Affairs—Walpole’s Tribute to Lady Sarah Lennox—Charlotte of Mecklenburg - Strelitz—George Announces his Betrothal—His Treatment of Lady Sarah—Princess Charlotte’s Letter to Frederick the Great—The Rivals—Princess Charlotte’s Arrival and Marriage—The Royal Coronation—Pitt and the Spanish Crisis—The Great Commoner Resigns—His Reward—The City’s Demonstration—A New Epoch in English History.

WHEN the American regiments marched through London on their way to France in the dark hours of the Great World War the dullest imagination among the onlookers, as well as among the troops themselves, must have been stirred as the men swung past the statue of George III.—still obstinately turning his back on them as he rode his restive charger in the middle of Pall Mall. It was the King’s identical attitude a century and more before. His feelings about America, as he told North after the Peace of 1783, had not altered, “ though circumstances constrained him to change his conduct,” and he remained implacable until the pitiful days when he became “ a crazy old blind man in Windsor Tower.” Had not the graceless colonists flouted the Parliament upon which he had succeeded in imposing his royal will, and discredited for ever his revival of the policy of personal government ? “ George, be King ! ” his mother had insisted, pointing out how shamefully George II. had been treated through the

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loss of the royal authority ; and if the new monarch did not actually ascend the Throne with a fixed determination to avenge his grandfather, he meant at least to be a ruler in reality as well as in name.

It is no part of our present purpose to trace all the tortuous paths by which he succeeded in recovering the power granted by the Revolution Settlement, but a true understanding of the disastrous results of his misuse of that power, and of the costly lessons by which he taught England the dangers of substituting personal for party government, is impossible without some adequate knowledge of the beginnings of the struggle. Trained by a mother whose notions of sovereignty were based on the petty despotism of the German Court in which she had been reared, and by her Scottish favourite, John Stuart, Earl of Bute, whose knowledge of the Englishman's love of liberty was as limited as the contemporary Englishman's appreciation of his own distrusted race, it is not surprising that George III. was convinced that he could only fulfil his highest duties as a Constitutional Monarch by overthrowing the dominating Whigs and restoring the power of the Crown.

He had lent a ready ear to the precepts of Bolingbroke's " Idea of a Patriot King," a pamphlet which has ill deserved the odium poured upon it by those who have grossly misrepresented its teaching. Bolingbroke did not exaggerate when he pointed out the perils of allowing the nation to remain under the rule of bribery and corruption. Salvation, he urged, was only to be found in a Monarch who, as the father of his people, would seek his sole happiness in studying their welfare, and, independent of Whig or Tory, govern according to their wishes. Unfortunately, it was not possible in those days of rotten boroughs and wholesale bribery to discover the true bent of the national will, even had George III. been ready to bend with it—which he was certainly not prepared to do. He learned enough from Bolingbroke, however, heartily to detest the party system in general and the Whigs in particular ; and in seeking to recover the power which had been stolen from the Monarchy he found the readiest means in the very weapons of corruption upon which the autocratic Whig ascendancy had been established.

The first note of the new policy was sounded in the sentence which he added to his maiden speech from the Throne: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Britain (*sic*), and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and affection I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my Throne." The King, who added this clause in his own hand, wrote "Britain," though it was quoted from the first as "Briton." In later life George declared that the phrase was entirely his own idea, but more probably it was added to the speech settled by the Ministers on the advice of Bute. The clause itself was attributed to the Scotsman,¹ and Bute would not hesitate to persuade the King to make the most of the natural advantages which he possessed over his two immediate predecessors—even at the risk of slighting their memory—who remained foreigners at heart to the end of their days. The new King was perfectly sincere in his belief that he was ordained to raise English political life from the slough into which it had fallen through the sordid rule of unscrupulous politicians. Some inkling of his design was soon suspected. "It is intimated," wrote Walpole to Sir Horace Mann a few days after his accession, "that he means to employ the same Ministers, but with reserve to himself of more authority than has lately been the fashion."²

It was necessary, however, to begin cautiously. Pitt was still the national idol, and the narrow, sheltered world to which the young King had been restricted by his mother and Bute, safeguarded from the temptations of a loose-living age, had neither broadened his views nor ensured his popularity. The people rejoiced in again possessing a King who could speak their own language, and possibly thought none the worse of him for being a pattern of all the virtues; but slander had been busy over the relations between the Princess Dowager and her favourite. Whether there was any truth in this or not, Bute's nationality, in an age when Englishmen from Johnson to Wilkes united in hating the Scots, was little calculated to help George in winning his

¹ Junius made a pointed reference to this in his address to the King some years later (see p. 269).

² Walpole's Letters.

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people's love. The tributes of Dr. Johnson and the courtiers who flocked to greet the rising sun need not be accepted as the true measure of the national feeling. According to the first Lord Holland, who was no bad judge, George III., "from the very beginning, was not popular."¹ Walpole, though he depicted his person to Horace Mann as "tall and full of dignity; his countenance florid and good-natured; his manner graceful and obliging," but expressing neither warmth nor resentment against anybody, "at most, coldness," also bears witness to the fact that the outburst of loyalty which greeted the new King was not unaccompanied by ugly warnings:

The City [he wrote to George Montagu on November 13] have a mind to be out of humour; a paper has been fixed on the Royal Exchange with these words: "No petticoat Government! no Scotch Minister! no Lord George Sackville!"—the two hints totally unfounded, and the other scarce true. No petticoat ever governed less; it is left at Leicester House; Lord George's breeches are as little concerned; and except for Lady Susan Stuart and Sir Harry Erskine, nothing has yet been done for any Scots. For the King himself, he seems all good-nature, and wishing to satisfy everybody. All his speeches are obliging. I was surprised to find the levée room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This Sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news; he walks about and speaks to everybody. I saw him afterwards on the Throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well.²

In the inner circle of the King's Ministry the new reign had not opened without disturbing signs of impending change. Pitt—whether intentionally or not is a disputed point—was slighted on the very day of the accession, when George, in his address to the Privy Council, spoke of the "bloody and

¹ "Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox" (1901), p. 76.

² Walpole's Letters.

expensive war"—the war in which the glories attending British arms had been largely attributed to the Great Commoner—and of "executing it in a manner likely to bring on an honourable and lasting peace." As no mention was made of England's allies, this would naturally have offended Frederick the Great had it reached his ears, as well as Pitt, who was determined that both expressions should be altered in the printed speech. This he succeeded in doing, but only after two hours' argument, the first offending expression being changed to "an expensive but just and necessary war"; and the saving clause, "in concert with my allies," being added to the second. The Duke of Newcastle, nominal head of the Administration in which Pitt reigned supreme, sent the following account of these proceedings to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke:

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE EARL OF
HARDWICKE.

[*"Rockingham and his Contemporaries."*]

COCKPIT, October 26, 1760.

I will give you a short account of what passed since our ever to be lamented loss. Mr. Martin¹ had orders to send me yesterday upon the road, to come immediately to the new King at Carlton House. I first went to Kensington, and there put on my clothes, and went to Carlton House, where I expected to meet the Council; but, upon my arrival, found Mr. Martin. He explained it, that I was to come alone. Immediately my Lord Bute came to me, and told me that the King would see me before anybody, or before he went to Council; that compliments from him, Lord Bute, now were unnecessary; that he had been, and should be my friend,—I should see it. I made suitable returns, and was called in to the King. He began by telling me that he desired to see me before he went to Council; that he had always a very good opinion of me; he knew my constant zeal for his family, and my duty to his grandfather, which he thought would

¹ Samuel Martin, Secretary of the Treasury. He was the earliest deserter from Newcastle. It was Samuel Martin who fought the duel with Wilkes, shooting him through the body (see p. 89).

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be pledges or proofs of my zeal for him. I said very truly, that no one subject his Majesty had, wished him more ease, honour, tranquillity, and success in the high station to which Providence had now called him ; and I think I cannot show my duty to my late royal master better than by contributing the little in my power to the ease and success of the reign of his grandson and successor. His Majesty said these remarkable words, "*My Lord Bute is your good friend,*" to which I replied, "I thought my Lord Bute was so."

Mr. Pitt was not sent for to Carlton House till some time after I had been there, and suspects, and, indeed said, the declaration was concerted with me, whereas I did not know one single word of it till the King communicated it to my Lord Halifax, Mr. Pitt and myself, and ordered me to read it, which I did very clearly and distinctly. His Majesty then said these words, "*Is there anything wrong in point of form ?*" We all bowed and went out of the closet. Mr. Pitt afterwards said he did not hear it distinctly, particularly the last words. I then, from memory, repeated it to him.

He wrote last night to Lord Bute. He had a conference of two hours, and told me that, as far as related to himself, Mr. Pitt, it was as satisfactory as he could wish. In short, Pitt was extremely hurt with the declaration projected, executed and entered in the Council books, of which he had no previous notice. It was at first "engaged in a bloody war." "That," says Pitt, "is false in the English part of it ; we are *sine clade victor*," and that the last words about "peace" certainly hurt him ; he said the "allies" were left out ; and to be short, it is altered, and Mr. Pitt's words were put in, but Lord Bute is not pleased.

Bute was chiefly to blame for this initial blunder, for George, it must be remembered, was young for his twenty-two years, and inexperienced. But he fully realised that he

must end the war before he could hope to dispense with the services of Pitt. He was not content with ascending the Throne in the hour of England's supremacy, after the naval operations which had won for her the undisputed sovereignty of the sea, and such military achievements as the winning of Canada under Wolfe and the beginning of the conquest of India under Clive. Probably he had been taught to believe that in these and other triumphs engineered by Pitt too much had been made of that Minister and too little of George II., ignoring the fact that his grandfather, like his great-grandfather before him, had regarded the wishes of England as of considerably less importance than the well-being of their beloved Hanover. George II. had been wise enough to realise that he was no match for such statesmen as Walpole and Pitt, and had submitted, however unwillingly, to the tacit understanding that the power of appointing his own Ministry, and shaping its policy to his own ends, had been taken from his hands.

George III. had been trained to change all that. The dominating influence of the Whigs must be broken, and the national worship of Pitt transferred to the King. It did not matter to George that his House of Brunswick-Lüneburg had been accepted by the English merely as a lesser evil than a Stuart Catholic reaction, and maintained by Whigs in order that the liberties of the people might run fewer risks of encroachment on the part of the Crown. Outwardly, however, the new reign, and the new year, began under the happiest auspices, as Sir Joseph Yorke wrote to the English Ambassador in Prussia :

GENERAL SIR JOSEPH YORKE TO SIR ANDREW MITCHELL.

[*Ellis's "Original Letters,"* Fourth Series, Vol. II.]

THE HAGUE, January 8, 1761.

. . . The young Monarch has ascended the Throne in the happiest era of the British nation, the first of his family born in England, in the prime of life, with a good constitution, and with the good opinion of his subjects. He has many amiable and virtuous qualities, is rather timid, but since his accession, I am told he represents well, and spoke his speech

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with great grace and dignity. He received all his grandfather's servants with great goodness, and pressed them to continue in his service ; which they consented to do, though some of them, particularly the Duke of Newcastle, were inclined to retire ; but all the Whigs in the kingdom united to desire his continuance in employment, and he was promised the direction in the new elections, with all the other influence he formerly enjoyed. Mr. Pitt has, however, the lead, and Lord Bute has a difficult game to play, as a personal friend and favourite, with weight, of course, but no employment of business. This, you see, must occasion new scenes, which will be represented as people's passions and interests lead them. Hitherto things have gone on smoothly in appearance, and in Parliament unanimously, and the only thing which occasioned a fluster was the invitation and admission of some Tory Lords and Commons into the Bedchamber ; a measure which I should have no objection to, if concerted ; but which, nevertheless, may rather tend to divide than to unite. In what way the new Parliament will be chosen we shall soon see. I hear the fashion at Court is to say, it shall be a Parliament of the people's own choosing ; which, in these times, may open the door to new cabals and difficulties, though the principle of it may be wise and honest.

Parliament having been dissolved with the death of George II., the first six months of the new reign were largely devoted to the General Election and changes in the Ministry. How openly corrupt were the elections, although the Court affected to frown on bribery, and Newcastle was no longer able to purchase seats with the financial assistance of the Crown, may be seen in Walpole's next letter :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, *March 3, 1761.*

Well, are you not peevish that the new reign leaves our correspondence more languid than the old ?

In all February not an event worth packing up and sending to you ! Neither changes, nor honours, nor squabbles yet. Lord Bute obliges everybody he can, and people seem extremely willing to be obliged. Mr. Pitt is laid up with a dreadful gout in all his limbs ; he did not sleep for fourteen nights, till one of his eyes grew as bad as his hands or feet. He begins to mend.

Whatever mysteries or clouds there are, will probably develop themselves as soon as the elections are over, and the Parliament fixed, which now engrosses all conversation and all purses ; for the expense is incredible. West Indies, conquerors, nabobs, and admirals, attack every borough ; there are no fewer than nine candidates at Andover. The change in a Parliament used to be computed at between sixty and seventy ; now it is believed there will be an hundred and fifty new members. Corruption now stands upon its own legs—no money is issued from the Treasury ; there are no parties, no pretence of grievances, and yet venality is grosser than ever ! The borough of Sudbury has gone so far as to advertise for a chapman ! We have been as victorious as the Romans, and are as corrupt : I don't know how soon the Prætorian militia will set the Empire to sale. Sir Nathaniel Curzon has struck a very novel stroke ; advertising that the King intended to make him a peer ; and, therefore, recommending his brother to the county of Derby for the same *independent* principles with himself. He takes a Peerage to prove his independence, and recommends his brother to the Opposition to prove his gratitude ! . . .

The new peerages will soon be declared. Legge is not of the number ; and yet has had an intimation to resign, being extremely out of favour in the new Court, where he had been so well, and which he had officiously contrived to disoblige very late in the day.

Henry Legge, having incurred the King's displeasure over one of the elections, was dismissed from the Chancellorship

of the Exchequer, that office being given to Lord Barrington, a loyal supporter of royal prerogative.

The importance of these and other Ministerial changes paled before the significance of the introduction of Bute into the Cabinet, first merely as a Groom of the Stole, and now as full-fledged Secretary of State, in place of Lord Holderness, and "Bubb" Dodington shrewdly hinted at the meaning of this move in some lines which he sent to Bute at the close of the previous year, "in relation to the measures to be taken to recover Monarchy from the inveterate usurpation of oligarchy . . . lines which must not be seen by anybody, unless his lordship has a mind to make the King or the Princess laugh":

Quoth Newcastle to Pitt, "'Tis in vain to dispute;
If we'd quarrel in private, we must make room for Bute."
Quoth Pitt to his Grace, "To bring that about,
I fear, my dear Lord, you or I must turn out."
"Not at all," quoth the Duke, "I meant no such thing.
To make room for us all, we must turn out the King."
"If that's all your scheme," quoth the Earl, "by my troth,
I shall stick to my master, and turn ye out both."¹

That Bute's advancement was a move on the King's own part—supported, doubtless, by his mother—is clear from the letter written by the new Secretary to Holderness, whom he was superseding. Whatever were Bute's faults and limitations, he was obviously no mere place-seeker in assuming his new responsibilities, but forced into the post by the ambitious young King, who found him essential to his scheme for recovering the lost power of the royal prerogative:

LORD BUTE TO LORD HOLDERNESS.

[*Add. MSS., British Museum, 36797, f. 45.*]

March 13, 1761.

I never took up pen with more anxiety in my life. I am to write on the most delicate subject, attended with the most singular circumstances, and that to an old acquaintance who is, however, not thoroughly apprized of the delicacy of my feelings. The stepping into another man's office is of all things to me the

¹ Manuscripts of Miss M. Eyre Matcham (Historical MSS. Commission).

most disagreeable ; how much more so when it belongs to one for whom I have a real respect and esteem. Yet this is the odious light I must at present appear in. I took the liberty of representing to his Majesty the uneasiness I should feel by his not having permitted me in some manner to apprize your lordship of his intentions, but other reasons prevented my having it in my power to alter his determination. His Majesty, however, indulges me in suffering me to state a few necessary facts to your lordship, in which I will be as brief as possible. Soon after the demise, the King, too partial to my poor services, insisted for several weeks upon my taking the Secretary's Office. I then used every argument to show in how much better hands the Seals were placed ; how much more useful I could be in a private line, how infinitely more agreeable to myself. With these and such like reasons I prevailed upon the King to think no more of it. Thus I continued quiet till within these three weeks, when his Majesty revived the idea, and has insisted upon it ever since ; and that at last in such a manner that in spite of all the difficulties I opposed, the earnest representations I made, duty and gratitude forced me to submit to what I could not help. I declare to your lordship from the bottom of my heart that the displacing you was a sufficient reason to make me dislike the office, but further I will frankly own that of all the Departments in the kingdom 'tis at this juncture the one I have the greatest aversion to. In this situation, my lord, condolence suits me better than congratulation, and I venture to affirm your lordship leaves it not with half the regret that I receive it. . . .

Holderness had little reason to complain of the handsome manner which Bute found of " repairing in some measure the disappointment that I am the innocent occasion of "—as he promised in the same letter. The compensation is mentioned by Barrington, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose

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place as Secretary at War was filled by the pushful Charles Townshend, and who had no illusions on the subject of his own fitness for office :

LORD BARRINGTON TO SIR ANDREW MITCHELL.

[*Ellis's "Original Letters,"* Fourth Series, Vol. II.]

CAVENDISH SQUARE, *March 23, 1761.*

My dear Mitchell,

. . . Our Administration is at last settled ; I think well settled in the main, and my opinion is that it will last. Our friend Holderness is finely in harbour : he has £4,000 a year for life, with the reversion of the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports after the Duke of Dorset, which he likes better than having the name of Pensioner. I never could myself understand the difference between a pension and a sinecure place.

The same strange fortune which made me Secretary at War five years and a half ago, has made me Chancellor of the Exchequer. It may perhaps at last make me Pope. I think I am equally fit to be at the head of the Church, as of the Exchequer. My reason tells me it would have been more proper to have given me an employment of less consequence, when I was removed from the War Office ; but no man knows what is good for him. My invariable rule therefore is, to ask nothing, to refuse nothing, to let others place me, and to do my best wherever I am placed.

I have the satisfaction to be perfectly well with my Royal Master, who really deserves all love and admiration, and with the three persons whose union can alone keep this country great and happy. Perhaps I may contribute to the continuance of it, and it shall be my utmost endeavour to do so.

In all situations, my dear Mitchell, I am equally your friend and servant. Use me always as such, and believe me ever

Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

BARRINGTON.

All this time George III. was passing through a crisis in the affairs of his heart as well as of his Cabinet. Perhaps it was as well for his morality that his mother had kept him as far as possible out of harm's way in his youth, for George had a keener eye for beauty than his two predecessors. There is no solid foundation for the familiar story of his alleged secret marriage with the pretty Quaker, Hannah Lightfoot, in his younger days as Prince of Wales—no convincing evidence of such an alliance has ever been produced—but there is no doubt about his well-regulated passion for handsome, dashing Lady Sarah Lennox, the youngest daughter of Charles, second Duke of Richmond, and a great-granddaughter of Charles II. Walpole, who is never tired of praising Lady Sarah, pays an eloquent tribute to her charms in his letter to the Countess of Ailesbury after the King's birthday celebrations in this first year of his reign :

HORACE WALPOLE TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

STRAWBERRY HILL, June 13, 1761.

The birthday exceeded the splendour of Haroun Alraschid and the "Arabian Nights," when people had nothing to do but to scour a lantern and send a genie for a hamper of diamonds and rubies. Do you remember one of those stories where a prince has eight statues of diamonds, which he overlooks, because he fancies he wants a ninth ; and to his great surprise the ninth proves to be pure flesh and blood, which he never thought of. Somehow or other, Lady Sarah [Lennox] is the ninth statue ; and, you will allow, has better white and red than if she was made of pearls and rubies. . . .

Lady Sarah was only fifteen at the time of the King's accession, and was already a favourite at Court. It was hardly surprising that George rather lost his head over her as her budding beauty developed. She was by no means responsive at first, having, indeed, a mild flirtation of her own at the time with young Lord Newbattle, afterwards fifth Marquess of Lothian. It was only when she was cured

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of this affair that she showed any inclination to meet the King half-way. And then it was too late. George was now committed to the marriage with Princess Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, which seems to have been arranged for him by his mother, thanks to the negotiations completed by her secretary, David Græme, or Graham, formerly an ardent Jacobite. A curious holograph letter from the Prince to Bute is said to exist, in which George agreed to act on the Minister's advice in regard to Lady Sarah, but desired the Earl forthwith to procure him a Consort of royal birth, "frankly stating that his passions were similar to those of other young men." ¹

Having nipped this English romance in the bud, just as they had thwarted George II.'s scheme to marry his grandson to Princess Sophia of Brunswick some years previously, Bute and the Princess Dowager chose for him instead a bride after their own hearts. Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz had been brought up as strictly as George himself. She possessed all the domestic virtues and none of the good looks and brilliant parts which might have made her a thorn in the side of her haughty, domineering mother-in-law. Not much older than the more dangerous Lady Sarah Lennox, her plainness must have come somewhat as a shock to her bridegroom when he compared her with the superlative beauty of his discarded flame. Having, as Wraxall says, "subdued his passion by the strength of his reason, his principles and his sense of public duty," he made the first announcement of his approaching marriage in the following declaration to his Council on July 8, 1761 :

Having nothing so much at heart as to procure the welfare and happiness of my people, and to render the same stable and permanent to posterity, I have, ever since my accession to the Throne, turned my thoughts towards the choice of a Princess for my Consort, and I now with great satisfaction acquaint you that, after the fullest information and mature deliberation, I am come to a resolution to demand in marriage the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, a Princess

¹ *Notes and Queries*, Tenth Series, Vol. VIII., p. 387.

distinguished by every eminent virtue and amiable endowment; whose illustrious line has constantly shown the firmest zeal for the Protestant religion, and a particular attachment to my family. I have judged proper to communicate to you these my intentions, in order that you may be fully apprized of a matter so highly important to me and to my Kingdoms, and which I persuade myself will be most acceptable to my loving subjects.¹

The royal matrimonial designs had been kept so secret that Henry Fox—afterwards Lord Holland—who, as Lady Sarah's uncle, had looked with covetous eyes to her marriage with the King as an easy stepping-stone to his own aggrandisement, could discover nothing on July 6 of the announcement to be made two days later. His disappointment was greater than that of Lady Sarah, although, from the King's own words only a few weeks previously, and his undisguised affection, she had fully persuaded herself that he was on the point of proposing for her hand. "For God's sake," he had told her, as recently as June 19, "remember what I said to Lady Susan before you went to the country"—referring to the message he had sent to her plainly pointing to matrimony—"and believe that I have the strongest attachment." This attachment, however, had been rather one-sided, and though Lady Sarah had reason to complain of his deception—or inexperienced attempts at gallantry—she was more upset by the loss of her favourite squirrel, which happened to die at the same time, than at the loss of a crown.² Nevertheless, she could speak her mind on the subject to her friend Lady Susan, who was as angry as Fox over what they regarded as the King's betrayal:

¹ Ellis's "Original Letters," Second Series, Vol. IV., p. 436.

² Lady Sarah lived to congratulate herself on her loss. She was twice married, first to Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, and afterwards to the Hon. George Napier, numbering among her sons both the conqueror of Scinde and the brilliant historian of the Peninsular War. "I like my sons better than I like the royal sons," she wrote in later revolutionary days, "thinking them better animals, and more likely to give me comfort in my old age; and I like better to be a subject, than subject to the terrors of royalty in these days of trouble."—*Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*"

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LADY SARAH LENNOX TO LADY SUSAN FOX
STRANGWAYS.

[" *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*"]

HOLLAND HOUSE, July 7, 1761.

My dearest Susan,

. . . To begin to astonish you as much as I was, I must tell you that the [King] is going to be married to a Princess of Mecklenburg, and that I am sure of it. There is a Council to-morrow on purpose ; the orders for it are *urgent* and *important* business ; does not your choler rise at hearing this ; but you think I daresay that I have been doing some terrible thing to deserve it, for you won't be easily brought to change so totally your opinion of any person ; but I assure you I have not. I have been very often since I wrote last, but though nothing was said, he always took pains to show me some preference by talking twice, and mighty kind speeches and looks ; even last Thursday, the day after the orders were come out, the hypocrite had the face to come up and speak to me with all the good humour in the world, and seemed to want to speak to me, but was afraid. There is something so astonishing in this that I can hardly believe, but yet Mr. Fox knows it to be true ; I cannot help wishing to-morrow over, though I can expect nothing from it. He must have sent to this woman before you went out of town ; then what business had he to begin again ? In short his behaviour is that of a man who has neither *sense*, *good-nature*, nor *honesty*. I shall go Thursday sennight ; I shall take care to show that I am not mortified to anybody, but if it is true that one can vex anybody with a reserved, cold manner, he shall have it, I promise him.

Now as to what I think about it as to myself excepting this little revenge, I have almost forgiven him. Luckily for me I did not love him, and only liked him, nor did the title weigh anything with me ; so little at least, that my disappointment did not *affect* my spirits above one hour or two I believe.

I did not cry I assure you, which I believe you will, as I know you were more set upon it than I was. The thing I am most angry at, is looking so like a fool, as I shall for having gone so often for nothing ; but I don't much care. If he was to change his mind again (which can't be though), and not give me a *very* good reason for his conduct, I would not have him, for if he is so weak as to be governed by everybody I shall have but a bad time of it. Now I charge you, dear Lady Sue, not to mention this to anybody but Lord and Lady Ilchester, and desire them not to speak of it to any mortal, for it will be said we invent stories and he will hate us all anyway, for one generally hates people that one is in the wrong with, and that knows one has acted wrong, particularly if they speak of it, and it might do a great deal of harm to all the rest of the family, and do me no good. So pray remember this, for a secret among many people is very bad, and I must tell it some.

According to a well-worn story George's heart was won by Princess Charlotte through the copy of a letter which she is said to have written to Frederick the Great in 1760 on the occasion of his victorious battle at Torgau :

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE TO FREDERICK THE GREAT.

[*Lewis Melville's "Farmer George."*]

May it please your Majesty, I am at a loss whether I should congratulate or condole with you on your late victory over Marshal Daun [November 3, 1760] since the same success which has covered you with laurels, has overspread the country of Mecklenburg with desolation. I know, Sire, that it seems unbecoming my sex, in this age of vicious refinement, to feel for one's country, to lament the horrors of war, or wish for the return of peace. I know you may think it more properly my province to study the arts of pleasing, or to inspect subjects of a more domestic nature ; but, however unbecoming it may be in me, I cannot resist the desire of interceding for this

unhappy people. It was but a very few years ago that this territory wore the most pleasing appearance; the country was cultivated, the peasants looked cheerful, and the towns abounded with riches and festivity. What an alteration at present from such a charming scene! I am not expert at description, nor can my fancy add any horrors to the picture; but surely even conquerors would weep at the hideous prospects now before me. The whole country, my dear country, lies one frightful waste, presenting only objects to excite terror, pity, and despair. The business of the husbandman and shepherd are discontinued. The husbandman and the shepherd are become soldiers themselves, and help to ravage the soil they formerly cultivated. The towns are inhabited only by old men, old women, and children; perhaps here and there a warrior, by wounds or loss of limbs, rendered unfit for service, left at his door; his little children hang around him, ask an history of every wound, and grow themselves soldiers, before they find strength for the field. But this were nothing, did we not feel the alternate insolence of either army as it happens to advance or retreat, in pursuing the operations for the campaign. It is impossible to express the confusion, even those who call themselves our friends create; even those from whom we might expect redress oppress with new calamities. From your justice, therefore, it is we hope relief. To you even women and children may complain, whose humanity stoops to the meanest petition, and whose power is capable of repressing the greatest injustice.

Truly a remarkable letter for an inexperienced girl of sixteen—if she ever wrote it. Congratulations so tempered by sage reflections on the horrors of war could not fail to impress George III., himself bent at the time on restoring peace at the earliest possible moment. "Here are lasting beauties," he is reported to have exclaimed to Lord Hertford; "the man who has any mind may feast and not be satisfied. If

the disposition of the Princess but equals her refined sense, I shall be the happiest man, as I hope, with my people's concurrence to be the greatest Monarch in Europe." When he wrote his pretty, if not strictly accurate account in his "Four Georges" Thackeray adapted the German story of how the King's proposal reached her :

They say the little Princess who had written the fine letter about the horrors of war—a beautiful letter without a single blot, for which she was to be rewarded like the heroine of the old spelling-book story—was at play one day with some of her young companions in the gardens of Strelitz, and that the young ladies' conversation was, strange to say, about husbands. "Who will take such a poor little Princess as me?" Charlotte said to her friend Ida von Bulow, and at that very moment the postman's horn sounded, and Ida said, "Princess! there is the sweetheart." As she said, so it actually turned out. The postman brought letters from the splendid young King of all England, who said, "Princess! because you have written such a beautiful letter, which does credit to your head and heart, come and be Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and be the true wife of your obedient servant GEORGE!" So she jumped for joy; and went upstairs and packed all her little trunks; and set off straightway for her kingdom in a beautiful yacht, with a harpsichord on board for her to play upon, and around her a beautiful fleet, all covered with flags and streamers: . . . It is said the King winced when he first saw his homely little bride; but however that may be, he was a true and faithful husband to her, as she was a faithful and loving wife.

Whatever George really thought of his bride's unfortunate features—and Lady Anne Hamilton, though an unreliable witness, declares that her first appearance came with such a shock that he "actually shrank from her gaze"—he was not brutal enough to repudiate her as Henry VIII. repudiated Anne of Cleves. Other witnesses testify that he welcomed her with every sign of satisfaction. He closed his strange chapter of romance with Lady Sarah Lennox, with what seemed like studied indifference, by appointing her among the bridesmaids to hold the new Queen's train. This was after she had herself been at some pains to show him what she thought of his conduct. "I went to Court this morning for the first time," she wrote to Lady Susan a week or so after the announcement of his betrothal. "He looked frightened when he saw me, but notwithstanding came up, with what countenance I don't know, for I was not so gracious as even to look at him; when he spoke, our conversation was short, here it is: 'I see riding is begun again, it's glorious weather

for it now.' *Answer* : ' Yes, it is very fine '—add to that a very cross and angry look on my side and his turning away immediately, and you know the whole." ¹

Her successful rival, married by proxy at Strelitz on August 15, left two days later for England, the Coronation having been fixed for September 22. She was caught in the North Sea by storms which tossed her yacht about for so many days that fears were entertained for her safety ; but she was none the worse for an experience which, after the monotony of her life in the Ducal Court, seems to have filled her with delight :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, September 10, 1761.

When we least expected the Queen, she came, after being ten days at sea, but without sickness for above half an hour. She was gay the whole voyage, sung to the harpsichord, and left the door of her cabin open. They made the coast of Suffolk last Saturday, and on Monday morning she landed at Harwich ; so prosperously has his Majesty's chief eunuch, as they have made the Tripoline Ambassador call Lord Anson, executed his commission. She lay that night at your old friend, Lord Abercorn's, at Witham [in Essex] ; and, if she judged by her host, must have thought she was coming to reign in the realm of taciturnity. She arrived at St. James's a quarter after three on Tuesday the 8th. When she first saw the Palace she turned pale : the Duchess of Hamilton smiled. " My dear Duchess," said the Princess, "*you* may laugh ; you have been married twice ; but it is no joke to me." Is this a bad proof of her sense ? On the journey they wanted her to curl her toupet. " No, indeed," said she, " I think it looks as well as those of the ladies who have been sent for me ; if the King would have me wear a periwig, I will ; otherwise I shall let myself alone." The Duke of York gave her his hand at the garden

¹ " Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox," Vol. I., p. 108.

gate ; her lips trembled, but she jumped out with spirit. In the garden the King met her ; she would have fallen at his feet ; he prevented and embraced her, and led her into the apartments, where she was received by the Princess of Wales and Lady Augusta ; these three Princesses only dined with the King. At ten the procession went to chapel, preceded by unmarried daughters of peers and peeresses in plenty. The new Princess was led by the Duke of York and Prince William ; the Archbishop married them ; the King talked to her the whole time with great good humour, and the Duke of Cumberland gave her away. She is not tall, nor a beauty ; pale and very thin ; but looks sensible, and is genteel. Her hair is darkish and fine ; her forehead low, her nose very well, except the nostrils spreading too wide ; her mouth has the same fault, but her teeth are good. She talks a good deal, and French tolerably ; possesses herself, is frank, but with great respect to the King. After the ceremony the whole company came into the drawing-room for about ten minutes, but nobody was presented that night. The Queen was in white and silver ; an endless mantle of violet-coloured velvet, lined with ermine, and attempted to be fastened on her shoulders by a bunch of large pearls, dragged itself and almost the rest of her clothes half-way down her waist. On her head was a beautiful little tiara of diamonds ; a diamond necklace, and a stomacher of diamonds, worth three score thousand pounds, which she is to wear at the Coronation too. Her train was borne by the ten bridesmaids, Lady Sarah Lennox, Lady Caroline Russell, Lady Caroline Montagu, Lady Harriet Bentinck, Lady Anne Hamilton, Lady Essex Kerr (daughters of the Dukes of Richmond, Bedford, Manchester, Portland, Hamilton, and Roxburgh) ; and four daughters of the Earls of Albemarle, Brook, Harcourt, and Ilchester—Lady Elizabeth Kepple, Louisa Greville, Elizabeth Harcourt, and Susan Fox Strangways : their heads crowned with diamonds, and in

robes of white and silver. Lady Caroline Russell is extremely handsome ; Lady Elizabeth Kepple very pretty ; but with neither features nor air, nothing ever looked so charming as Lady Sarah Lennox ; she has all the glow of beauty peculiar to her family. As supper was not ready the Queen sat down, sung and played on the harpsichord to the Royal Family, who all supped with her in private. They talked of the different German dialects ; the King asked if the Hanoverian was not pure—" Oh, no, sir," said the Queen ; " it is the worst of all." She will not be unpopular.

The Duke of Cumberland told the King that himself and Lady Augusta were sleepy. The Queen was very averse to leave the company, and at last articulated that nobody should accompany her but the Princess of Wales and her own two German women, and that nobody should be admitted afterwards but the King—they did not retire till between two and three.

The next morning the King had a Levée. He said to Lord Hardwicke : " It is a very fine day." That old gossip replied, " Yes, sir, and it was a very fine night." Lord Bute had told the King that Lord Orford had betted his having a child before Sir James Lowther, who had been married the night before to Lord Bute's eldest daughter ; the King told Lord Orford he should be glad to go halves. The bet was made with Mr. Rigby. Somebody asked the latter how he could be so bad a courtier as to bet against the King ? He replied, " Not at all a bad courtier ; I betted Lord Bute's daughter against him."

After the King's Levée there was a Drawing-Room ; the Queen stood under the Throne : the women were presented to her by the Duchess of Hamilton, and then the men by the Duke of Manchester ; but as she knew nobody, she was not to speak. . . . A ridiculous circumstance happened yesterday ; Lord Westmoreland, not very young nor clear-sighted, mistook Lady Sarah Lennox for

the Queen, kneeled to her, and would have kissed her hand if she had not prevented him. People think that a Chancellor of Oxford was naturally attracted by the blood of Stuart.¹

The contrast between the new and the old love became less marked in later life, when, according to Croker, "it used to be said that she was grown better looking. I one day said something to this effect to Colonel Desbrowe, her Chamberlain. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I do think the *bloom* of her ugliness is going off!'" A fortnight after the royal marriage came the Coronation, an unprecedented scene of pomp and pageantry which has been described by many eye-witnesses, but nowhere more effectively than in the familiar gossip of the inimitable Walpole :

HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE MONTAGU.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, September 24, 1761.

All the vines of Bordeaux, and all the fumes of Irish brains cannot make a town so drunk as a regal wedding and Coronation. I am going to let London cool, and will not venture into it again this fortnight. Oh! the buzz, the prattle, the crowds, the noise, the hurry! Nay, people are so little come to their senses, that though the Coronation was but the day before yesterday, the Duke of Devonshire had forty messages yesterday, desiring tickets for a ball that they fancied was to be at Court last night. People had sat up a night and a day, and yet wanted to see a dance. If I was to entitle ages, I would call this the *century of crowds*. For the Coronation, if a

¹ "Lord Westmoreland, a very old Jacobite follower of the Pretender's, who was purblind, and had never appeared at Court since the Hanoverian succession, but was persuaded by his friends to honour the marriage of a native Monarch by his presence; passing along the line of ladies, and seeing but dimly, mistook my mother for the Queen, plumped down on his knees, and took her hand to kiss! She drew back startled, and, deeply colouring, exclaimed, 'I am not the Queen, sir.' This little incident created a laugh and a little gossip; and when George Selwyn heard of it, he comically enough observed, 'O, you know he always loved *Pretenders!*'"—*Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox.*"

puppet-show could be worth a million, that is. The multitudes, balconies, guards, and processions, made Palace-yard the liveliest spectacle in the world: the Hall was the most glorious. The blaze of lights, the richness and variety of habits, the ceremonial, the benches of peers and peeresses, frequent and full, was as awful as a pageant can be: and yet for the King's sake and my own, I never wish to see another; nor am impatient to have my Lord Effingham's promise fulfilled. The King complained that so few precedents were kept for their proceedings. Lord Effingham owned the Earl Marshal's office had been strangely neglected; but he had taken such care for the future, that the *next Coronation* would be regulated in the most exact manner imaginable.

The number of peers and peeresses present was not very great; some of the latter, with no excuse in the world, appeared in Lord Lincoln's gallery, and even walked about the hall indecently in the intervals of the procession. My Lady Harrington, covered with all the diamonds she could borrow, hire or seize, and with the air of Roxana, was the finest figure at a distance; she complained to George Selwyn that she was to walk with Lady Portsmouth, who would have a wig and a stick. "Pho," said he, "you will only look as if you were taken up by the constable." She told this everywhere, thinking the reflection was on my Lady Portsmouth. Lady Pembroke, alone at the head of the countesses, was the picture of majestic modesty; the Duchess of Richmond as pretty as nature and dress, with no pains of her own, could make her; Lady Spencer, Lady Sutherland, and Lady Northampton, very pretty figures. Lady Kildare, still beauty itself, if not a little too large. The ancient peeresses were by no means the worst party: Lady Westmoreland, still handsome, and with more dignity than all; the Duchess of Queensbury looked well, though her locks milk-white; Lady Albemarle very genteel; nay, the middle age had some good representatives in

Lady Holderness, Lady Rochford, and Lady Stafford, the perfectest little figure of all. My Lady Suffolk ordered her robes, and I dressed part of her head, as I made some of my Lord Hertford's dress ; for you know, no profession comes amiss to me, from a tribune of the people to a habit-maker.

Don't imagine that there were not figures as excellent on the other side ; old Exeter, who told the King he was the handsomest man she ever saw ; old Effingham and a Lady Say and Seal, with her hair powdered and her tresses black, were an excellent contrast to the handsome. Lord B[olingbroke] put rouge upon his wife and the Duchess of Bedford in the Painted Chamber ; the Duchess of Queensbury told me of the latter, that she looked like an orange-peach, half red and half yellow. The coronets of the peers and their robes disguised them strangely ; it required all the beauty of the Dukes of Richmond and Marlborough to make them noticed. One there was, though of another species, the noblest figure I ever saw, the High Constable of Scotland, Lord Errol ; as one saw him in a space capable of containing him, and admired him. At the wedding, dressed in tissue, he looked like one of the giants in Guildhall, new gilt. It added to the energy of his person, that one considered him acting so considerable a part in that very Hall, where so few years ago one saw his father, Lord Kilmarnock, condemned to the block.

The Champion acted his part admirably, and dashed down his gauntlet with proud defiance. His associates, Lord Effingham, Lord Talbot, and the Duke of Bedford, were woeful ; Lord Talbot, the Lord High Steward, piqued himself on backing his horse down the Hall, and not turning its rump towards the King, but he had taken such pains to dress it to that duty, that it entered backwards : and at his retreat the spectators clapped, a terrible indecorum, but suitable to such Bartholomew-fair doings. He had twenty *démêlés*, and came out of none creditably. . . . This has brought me to a

melancholy topic. Bussy goes to-morrow, a Spanish war is hanging in the air, destruction is taking a new lease of mankind—of the remnant of mankind. I have no prospect of seeing Mr. Conway. Adieu! I will not disturb you with my forebodings. You I shall see again in spite of war, and I trust in spite of Ireland. I was much disappointed at not seeing your brother John: I kept a place for him to the last minute, but have heard nothing of him. Adieu!

Walpole shifts the scene to the political stage, and the long-drawn-out peace negotiations which, beginning in March, had broken down in this regal month of September. While the King's marriage and Coronation were filling the minds of the people the situation abroad had been complicated by the Bourbon "Family Compact," by which France had secured an ally in Spain through pledging herself to conclude no peace with the common foe without a satisfactory settlement of Spain's own disputes with England. Fresh laurels arising out of the capture of Belleisle, Pondicherry, and Dominica had strengthened the hands of the English war party, but failed to give Pitt his accustomed triumphs in the Cabinet Council meetings. Newcastle had betrayed his old, overbearing colleague to Bute, and, with his equally treacherous allies, Hardwicke and Devonshire, had secretly agreed to support the intrigue which had made Bute Secretary of State. The betrayal began in the following way:

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE TO THE DUKE OF
NEWCASTLE.

[*Add. MSS., British Museum, 32927, f. 154.*]

August 21, 1761.

I was with Lord Bute this morning and told him everything your Grace had said to me, and represented to him how impossible it would be for you to continue in employment if there was not a right understanding and cordiality between you; that you were not conscious to have done anything to merit the cold treatment you received from him; you had never endeavoured to ingratiate yourself at his expense, nor made the least application but

through him. . . . There was little or no occasion for me to reason with him ; he allowed there had been a coldness between you, but he thought it had been as much on your side as his. However, he was quite satisfied with what you said ; that he wished nothing more than to live well and in friendship with you ; that what had happened was in great measure owing to your not talking enough together ; desired that might be remedied for the future, and that there might be a day or hour settled in every week to talk over all business ; protested he had no connexion with anybody, and meant seriously to unite with you ; desired that when you came to town you might come to an explanation, and expressed himself with as much good humour as could be desired. . . .

Newcastle, as well as his allies, soon had cause bitterly to repent this betrayal, but for the time being the new *entente* clipped the wings of the all-powerful Minister, and favoured terms of peace which Pitt naturally regarded as a policy of surrender after all the unparalleled conquests of British arms. Eager as Bute was for peace, as an essential preliminary to the success of his royal master's schemes, he had shunned the odium of an unpopular settlement both in his own interests, and in those of the King, and for a time had affected an alliance with Pitt. Having gone far enough in that direction, however, he now deserted him for Newcastle and the party of compromise, leaving them apparently to take the lead in these matters. When, therefore, the Spanish crisis complicated the peace negotiations, Pitt found himself opposed by a combination against which he was powerless to prevail. In vain he urged the necessity of an immediate declaration of war against Spain—convinced that a conflict with that power was inevitable—but his colleagues declined to do more than recall Hans Stanley from Paris and break off the negotiations with France. They were unaware of all the secret clauses of the Family Compact, and, unwilling to believe that war with Spain was merely a question of time, preferred the halting policy of procrastination.

The stormy Cabinet meetings which decided Pitt's fate took place in the very midst of the Coronation excitement. Pitt, whose sole supporter in the Cabinet was his brother-in-law, Earl Temple, based his new policy on an intercepted note from the Spanish envoy in Paris, and a letter to himself in which Stanley disclosed some part of the secret treaty with France. In a speech which he had taken the precaution to commit to writing he urged that "we ought from prudence as well as from spirit, to secure to ourselves the first blow; that to carry on this war with vigour, it was only necessary to continue our present efforts, and that if any war could provide its own resources, it must be a war with Spain; that their fleet [from the Plate] had not yet arrived, and that the taking of it would at once disable their, and strengthen our, hands; and that this procedure, so suited to the dignity of the nation, and the insults it had received, would be a lesson to Spain, and to every other power, how they should presume to dictate in our affairs, and to intermeddle with a menacing mediation, and an officiousness as insidious as it was audacious." The peace party, however, was not to be carried away with this bellicose eloquence, while the First Lord of the Admiralty protested that the English Fleet could not be fitted out in time for the sudden stroke demanded by Pitt. Foiled in the Cabinet the Minister took his "advice in writing," as his speech has come to be known, to the King himself, with the following result:

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE EARL OF
HARDWICKE.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

September 21, 1761.

Mr. Pitt brought his paper, or rather protest, this day to the King, and offered it to his Majesty, who declined accepting it. My Lord Bute was present, and said, "As you, sir, have given your reasons, and those of Lord Temple, for your opinion, it is but reasonable that those who dissent from you should give theirs also." And I think it was agreed that Mr. Pitt's paper should be inserted in the minute with our dissent.

The King said to Mr. Pitt that he would take no resolution with regard to Spain till Mr. Stanley was arrived, for he believed he might give some necessary lights with regard to Spain. Mr. Pitt seemed surprised, but said nothing. When he came to Council (my Lord Mansfield, who had been very ill in the night, was there), Mr. Pitt resumed the debate, so far as related to the paper, to which he was determined to adhere.

Lord Bute spoke, and mentioned with great respect your lordship's absence, and my Lord President's, which, added to the use that might be had in seeing Mr. Stanley, was a reason for putting off this consideration. Mr. Pitt replied, that he had heard all that the most *able* men could say. He had not departed from his first opinion, and should not; neither did he see any use that Mr. Stanley could be of. Lord Bute named the King as wishing to have Stanley here, before his Majesty came to any decision. The Duke of Devonshire and myself spoke strongly in adhering to our former opinions. The Duke of Devonshire proposed the orders to be sent to Lord Bristol [English Ambassador to Spain] to require an explanation what the intentions of Spain were, and to enter into the expedient proposed about the logwood; but, at all events, in case of an unsatisfactory answer, my Lord Bristol should immediately come away. Lord Mansfield spoke long, not *very clearly*, but rather on our side, laying it down that it did not appear to him what operations could be undertaken against Spain that would suffer by the delay.

That gave Mr. Pitt a great advantage, to expatiate upon his great schemes, and the almost certainty of the success against the united force of the House of Bourbon; but then there was not an hour to be lost.

Lord M—— replied, that "if that was the case, it would then appear in a very different light," and plainly made fair weather with Mr. Pitt.

My Lord Bute mentioned his behaviour to me

afterwards, and said, "*My lord, that is the man.*"¹ Mr. Pitt adhered to his paper, said he would not execute any other measure, and insinuated that the other Secretary of State [Bute] might do it. Mr. Pitt lamented his situation, repented of the difficulties he had been led into by the French negotiation, and was determined now to abide by his own opinion. He spoke very long, very well, and very determined, but with great politeness and candour. His brother-in-law [Temple] was the very reverse ; he spoke long, indeed, very pompously, very passionate, very ill-bred, but very determined ; and showed plainly that their party was rather to quit, or at least to have no share in any measure but their own.

My Lord Temple was very abusive, and said he thought "some of the company had paid dear for their whistle, *relaxation.*" I took this up, I hope, with spirit, and I think, to the satisfaction of my friends. The meeting ended ; adjourned, as it were, *sine die*, for Stanley ; and Mr. Pitt gave his papers in form to my Lord Bute, to be delivered to the King. After all was over, my Lord Bute, the Duke of Devonshire, and I had a most material conference, which they desired I would communicate to your lordship. The Duke of Devonshire and I declared that no consideration or threat from Mr. Pitt should make us depart from our opinion. My Lord Bute said we were right ; that the thing was over ; that after what had passed, Mr. Pitt and my Lord Temple would not stay. Besides, if Mr. Pitt would execute nothing but his own paper, business could not go on, and, therefore, he would concert with us what was to be done.

We both said that, without departing from our opinion, we wished anything might be done to keep Mr. Pitt ; my Lord Bute said that was impossible.

George III., anxious above all things to prevent the war from spreading, and eager to feel the reins of government in

¹ Note by second Lord Hardwicke : " Yet Lord Bute made great use of him afterwards."

his own hands, had no intention of pressing Pitt to change his mind. "The King," wrote Newcastle to Hardwicke on September 26, "seems every day more offended with Mr. Pitt, and plainly wants to get rid of him at all events." ¹ On October 5, the royal wish was granted, Pitt carrying out on that date the threat which he made at the decisive Cabinet meeting held on the 2nd, when he is reported to have declared that if he could not prevail in this instance, this should be the last time he would sit in that Council. "He thanked the Ministers of the late King for their support; said he was himself called to the Ministry by the voice of the people, to whom he conceived himself accountable for his conduct, and that he would not remain in a situation which made him responsible for measures he was no longer allowed to guide." ² Only Temple followed his brother-in-law into retirement, where the wily Bute induced the Great Commoner to risk his unbounded popularity by accepting the royal bounty. Bute, who had hoped for peace before dispensing with Pitt's unequalled services, realised that the popular idol might be even more dangerous in active opposition at such a time than in power, and did his best to prove that after all Pitt could be bought, like most other politicians of his day. He first tempted him with the offer of the Governorship of Canada, residence for which was to be unnecessary:

The government of the Province of Canada, with a salary of five thousand pounds, seemed to strike the King most; and that for two reasons: the first as you would preside over a province acquired by your own ability and firmness; secondly, as it would convey to all the world his Majesty's intentions of never parting with that great and important conquest. The objection of its not being tenable with a seat in Parliament is foreseen; but a short bill might remedy that in this new case; in the preamble of which the King's reasons for this appointment would be set forth. If, however, this should not strike you in the same light it does his

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 44.

² Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., p. 143.

Majesty, the next thing I am ordered to mention is the Chancellor of the Duchy, with the salary annexed to it as before mentioned. You will please, sir, to consider these as proofs of the King's earnest desire to show this country the high opinion he has of your merit. If they do not entirely please, impute it to the want of information I before hinted at ; and do me the justice to believe, that I never shall execute any commission with more pleasure than I have done this.¹

On the evening of the same day Bute confided to Bubb Dodington, now Lord Melcombe, how clearly he realised the danger in his present unexpected position, with the popular favourite's resignation forced upon him before he was prepared for it :

LORD BUTE TO LORD MELCOMBE.

[*Adolphus's "History of England,"* Vol. I., App.]

October 8, 1761.

My dear Lord,

Whatever private motives of uneasiness I might have in the late Administration I am far from thinking the dissolution of it favourable, in the present minute, to the King's affairs. Without entering into the causes of the war it is sufficient to observe that it was a national one, and that the honour of the nation is pledged to support its allies. You, my dear Lord, cannot dislike it more than I do, but as we have to do with a most treacherous enemy, whose infamous prevarications have been so lately experienced, we must act with redoubled vigour and spirit before we can hope to bring them to such a peace as, from our repeated conquests, this country has a right to expect, such a peace as I (with this load of responsibility) durst not put my name to. This being so, the change of a Minister cannot, at present, make any remarkable change in measures. I sigh after peace, but will not sue for it ; not out of

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., pp. 147—8.



Emery Walker, photographer

JOHN STUART, THIRD EARL OF BUTE, K.G.

From the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds
in the possession of the Earl of Wharnccliffe, R.N.

pride, or from motives of self-preservation (though both might, without dishonour, be urged), but from a thorough conviction that begging it from France is not the way to procure it. Indeed, my good Lord, my situation, at all times perilous, is become much more so, for I am no stranger to the language held in this great city : *our darling's resignation* is due to Lord Bute, who might have prevented it with the King, and he must answer for all the consequences ; which is, in other words, for the miscarriage of another's system, that he (Pitt) himself could not have prevented. All this keeps up my attention, strengthens my mind without alarming it, and not only whispers caution, but steadiness and resolution.

Chatham, as will be seen, declined to become either Governor of Canada or Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, but did so with prostrate humility, and threw out a hint which Bute and the King were quick to take :

WILLIAM PITT TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

October 7, 1761.

My Lord,

Overwhelmed with the extent of his Majesty's gracious goodness towards me, I desire the favour of your lordship to lay me at the royal feet, with the humble tribute of the most unfeigned and respectful gratitude. Penetrated with the bounteous favour of a most benign Sovereign and master, I am confounded with his condescension in deigning to bestow one thought about any inclination of his servant, with regard to the modes of extending to me marks of his royal beneficence.

Any public mark of his Majesty's approbation, flowing from such a spontaneous source of clemency, will be my comfort and my glory ; and I cannot but be highly sensible of all those circumstances, so peculiarly honourable, which, attending the first of the two ideas suggested to me by his Majesty's direction, have been mentioned. Commanded, how-

ever, as I am by the King, in a manner so infinitely gracious, not to suppress my thoughts on a subject of this extreme delicacy, I trust it will be judged obedience, not presumption, if I express the doubts I have as to the propriety of my going into either of the offices mentioned, or indeed, considering that which I have resigned, going again into any whatever.

Thus much in general I have presumed, not without pain and fear, to submit to his Majesty's consideration ; too proud to receive any mark of the King's countenance and favour, but above all doubly happy could I see those dearer to me than myself comprehended in that monument of royal approbation and goodness, with which his Majesty shall condescend to distinguish me.

I cannot conclude this letter, already much too long, without expressing my warm thanks to your lordship for the most obliging manner in which you have conveyed to me his Majesty's gracious intentions, and assuring your lordship, that I shall always set a high value on the favourable sentiments which you are pleased to express on my subject. I have the honour to be, with great truth and respect,

Your, etc.,
W. PITT.

The sequel is best told in the two letters which follow :

THE EARL OF BUTE TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

October 8, 1761.

Sir,

I laid the contents of your letter before his Majesty ; who was graciously pleased to admit of the reasons you gave for not accepting office, and to approve of the respectful openings some part of the letter afforded.

Having received the King's commands to consider of the most becoming method of carrying his intentions into execution, I have lost no time in my researches. The English civil list would by no

means answer ; the Irish had objections : one only thing remained, that could possibly serve the King's generous purpose. This his Majesty approves of, and has directed me accordingly to acquaint you, that as you declined accepting any office, his Majesty will confer the dignity of peerage on Lady Hester Pitt, to descend through her ladyship to your sons, with a grant of three thousand pounds per annum, on the plantation duties, to yourself and any two other lives you shall name. These unusual marks of the royal approbation cannot fail to be agreeable to a mind like yours. Permit me to assure you, that the communicating of them gives me the greatest pleasure. I am, sir, with unfeigned regard,

Your most obedient humble servant,

BUTE.

WILLIAM PITT TO THE EARL OF BUTE.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

October 8, 1761.

I have not words to express the sentiments of veneration and gratitude with which I receive the unbounded effects of beneficence and grace, which the most benign of Sovereigns has condescended to bestow on me, and on those most dear to me.

Your lordship will not wonder if the sensations which possess my whole breast refuse me the power of describing their extent, and leave me only to beg your lordship will be so good as to lay me and Lady Hester at the King's feet, and to offer for us to his Majesty the genuine tribute of the truly feeling heart ; which I will dare to hope, the same royal benevolence which showers on the unmeritorious such unlimited benefits may deign to accept with equal condescension and goodness.

I am, etc.,

W. PITT.

Although nothing was further from the thoughts of Pitt than that in accepting the King's bounty he was selling himself to the Court—his reward being accepted solely as some

acknowledgment of his illustrious services in the past—it was not surprising that the world at large jumped to the worst conclusions as soon as it heard the news. Bute saw to it that the announcement of the peerage and the pension should be published in the *Gazette* at once, and the success of his Machiavellian move was for the time being complete. At first the City was incredulous, and then ready to burn its shattered idol in effigy. “The City and the people are outrageous about Lady *Cheat'em*, as they call her, and her husband’s pension,” wrote Rigby to the Duke of Bedford on October 2; and Burke, in defending Pitt, refers to the “torrent of low and illiberal abuse” which greeted the news :

The rewards and honours so justly conferred on him by his Sovereign were, by every trick of wit, ridicule, and buffoonery converted into matter of degradation and disgrace. . . . Under him Great Britain carried on the most important war in which she was ever engaged, alone and unassisted, with greater splendour, and with more success, than she had ever enjoyed at the head of the most powerful alliances. Alone this island seemed to balance the rest of Europe. In short, he revived the military genius of our people; he supported our allies; he extended our trade; he raised our reputation; he augmented our dominions. With regard to the pension and title, it is a shame that any defence should be necessary. What eye cannot distinguish, at the first glance, the difference between this and the exceptional case of titles and pensions? What Briton, with the smallest sense of honour and gratitude, but must blush for his country, if such a man retired unrewarded from the public service, let the motives to that retirement be what they would? It was not possible that his Sovereign could let his eminent services pass unrequited: the sum that was given was undoubtedly inadequate to his merits; and the quantum was rather regulated by the moderation of the great mind that received it, than by the liberality of that which bestowed it.

Horace Walpole viewed the matter in a different light in his letter on the subject to the Hon. Henry (afterwards Marshal) Conway, who had served as second in command of the Rochfort expedition under Sir John Mordaunt in 1757 :

HORACE WALPOLE TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, *October 12, 1761.*

It is very lucky that you did not succeed in the expedition to Rochfort. Perhaps you might have been made a peer ; and as *Chatham* is a naval title, it might have fallen to your share. But it was reserved to crown greater glory ; and lest it should not be substantial pay enough, three thousand pounds a-year for three lives go along with it. Not to Mr. Pitt—you can't suppose it. Why truly, not the title, but the annuity does, and Lady Hester is the Baroness ; that, if he should please, he may earn an Earldom himself. Don't believe me if you have not a mind. I know I did not believe those who told me. But ask the *Gazette* that swears it—ask the King, who has kissed Lady Hester—ask the City of London who are ready to tear Mr. Pitt to pieces—ask forty people I can name, who are overjoyed at it—and then ask me again, who am mortified, and who have been the dupe of his disinterestedness. Oh, my dear Harry ! I beg you on my knees, keep your virtue : do let me think there is still one man upon earth who despises money.

I wrote you an account last week of his resignation. Could you have believed that in four days he would have tumbled from the conquest of Spain to receiving a quarter's pension from Mr. West ? [Secretary to the Treasury]. To-day he has advertised his seven coach-horses to be sold—Three thousand a-year for three lives, and fifty thousand pounds of his own will not keep a coach and six. I protest I believe he is mad, and Lord Temple thinks so too ; for he resigned the same morning that Pitt accepted the pension. . . . Delaval has said an admirable thing ;

he blames Pitt—not as you and I do ; but calls him a fool ; and says if he had gone into the City, told them he had a poor wife and children unprovided for, and had opened a subscription, he would have got five hundred thousand pounds, instead of three thousand pounds a-year. In the meantime the good man has saddled us with a war which we can neither carry on nor carry off. 'Tis pitiful ! 'tis wondrous pitiful ! . . .

Pitt himself found it necessary to defend his good name in the City, where, hitherto his followers had been ready to worship the very ground he walked on. His letter to his enthusiastic supporter, Alderman Beckford, was written from Hayes, to which he had already retired, having decided to let his house in town, as well as sell his coach-horses :

WILLIAM PITT TO WILLIAM BECKFORD.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HAYES, *October 15, 1761*

Dear Sir,

Finding, to my great surprise, that the cause and manner of my resigning the seals are grossly misrepresented in the City, as well as that the most gracious and spontaneous marks of his Majesty's approbation of my services, which marks followed my resignation, have been infamously traduced, as a bargain for my forsaking the public, I am under the necessity of declaring the truth of both these facts, in a manner which I am sure no gentleman will contradict. A difference of opinion with regard to measures to be taken against Spain, of the highest importance to the honour of the Crown, and to the most essential national interests, and this founded on what Spain had already done, not on what that Court may further intend to do, was the cause of my resigning the seals. Lord Temple and I submitted in writing, and signed by us, our most humble sentiments to his Majesty ; which being over-ruled by the united opinion of all the rest of the King's servants, I resigned the seals on Monday, the 5th of

this month, in order not to remain responsible for measures which I was no longer allowed to guide. Most gracious public marks of his Majesty's approbation of my services followed my resignation. They are unmerited, and unsolicited ; and I shall ever be proud to have received them from the best of Sovereigns.

I will now only add, my dear sir, that I have explained these matters only for the honour of truth, not in any view to court return of confidence from any man, who, with a credulity as weak as it is injurious, has thought fit hastily to withdraw his good opinion from one who has served his country with fidelity and success ; and who justly reveres the upright and candid judgment of it ; little solicitous about the censures of the capricious and the ungenerous. Accept my sincerest acknowledgments for all your kind friendship, and believe me ever, with truth and esteem, my dear sir,

Your faithful friend,
W. PITT.

It only needed just this personal explanation to restore all the City's loyalty and more, to its forsaken hero, as Bute found to his cost on Lord Mayor's Day, when he accompanied the King and Queen to the Guildhall. Beckford had entreated Pitt to attend as well, together with Lord Temple, "to which," as his wife wrote on the alderman's invitation, "he yielded for his friend's sake ; but as he always declared, both then and after, against his better judgment." ¹ The family solicitor sent Lady Chatham the following account of her husband's extraordinary reception :

THOMAS NUTHALL TO LADY CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

Friday, November 12, 1761.

When I wrote my last note to your ladyship, I had heard but little concerning the triumphal entry into the City on Lord Mayor's day. It now comes

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., p. 165.

out, that a party of bruisers, with George Stephenson, the one-eyed fighting coachman, at their head, had been hired to attend the chariot which contained the blazing comet and the new Chancellor of the Exchequer [Lord Barrington] (which last, it seems, has undertaken to raise the supplies for the next year by a tax upon wild ducks), and to procure shouts and acclamations from the mob.

By the time the procession, which moved but slowly, had got into St. Paul's Churchyard, these fellows had halloed themselves hoarse, and it had been given out that Mr. Pitt was in the chariot, by which means, they had artfully obtained the mob to join them; but, on the east side of St. Paul's Churchyard, some knowing hand stepped up, and looking full at the idol, pronounced, with a fine hoarse audible voice, "by G—d, this is not Pitt; this is Bute, and be damned to him;" (I beg pardon of your ladyship for writing such words; but historians ought to tell facts as they happened.) Upon this, the tide took another turn; and the bruisers' lungs being worn out, the shouts from the independent nobility were instantly converted into hisses, accompanied with a few vulgar sayings, as "D—n all Scotch rogues!"—"No Bute!"—"No Newcastle salmon!"—"Pitt for ever!"

By the time they reached Cheapside, it was discovered there were some bruisers hired for protectors: this gave still greater offence, and then they began to be more outrageous; and on the turn into King Street an attack began on the coachman and footmen behind with dirt, some of which found its way into the chariot, and very much altered the colour of the new Chancellor's ruffles [Barrington]; for it fixed on him only. Before they arrived at Guildhall, the bruisers were almost bruised to death themselves. Stephenson had been obliged to retire under the chariot, and with great difficulty got into Guildhall Coffee-house in great disgrace, and trampled under foot. It was with no small labour the chariot got

up to the gate of Guildhall, where the constables and peace officers, being numerous, prevented further mischief ; but had there been a furlong further to go, the mob would certainly have cut the harnesses in pieces, and probably gone to greater extremity. At night, his lordship took the opportunity to get into the Lord Chancellor's State coach, and went away with him, and by that means got home quietly ; but I have not yet heard how he rested. I am, madam,

Your most obedient servant,
T. NUTHALL.

The riotous scenes in the City did not raise Pitt in the eyes of such men as Walpole, who poured out his contempt in the following letter, without, however, being aware of Pitt's reluctance to take part in the procession :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, November 14, 1761.

Patriotism, prostitution, power, patriotism again—one ought to be new to it all, to see it in an amusing light—but I recollect that you wish to hear it, and I submit to run through a recapitulation of what moves little more than my contempt !

The Common Council (calling themselves the City of London) have given Mr. Pitt a dispensation for taking a pension, on his writing them a letter, in which he acquainted them, that as he could not be a monarch for their sakes, he would content himself, like them, with a private station, and with giving all the disturbance he could. You have seen his letters in the papers—my paraphrase is not stronger than his own commentary on his behaviour. They thanked him and instructed their members to tread in his steps. . . .

A week afterwards the King, Queen, and Royal Family dined with the Lord Mayor ; but a young King, and a new Queen, were by no means the

principal objects of attention. A chariot and pair, containing Mr. Pitt and Lord Temple, formed the chief part of the triumph. The reception, acclamation and distinction paid to Mr. Pitt through the streets, and the observance of him in Guildhall were equal to anything you can imagine. You will call his appearance there arrogant—I do not think it was very well bred. Since that—for pensions stop the mouths only of courtiers, not of the virtuous—he has harangued in the House with exceeding applause ; it was fine, guarded, artful—very inflammatory. Don't think I am paying court by censuring a *late* Minister. He is too near being Minister again for mine to be interested conduct. It never was my turn, nor do the examples I see make me any more in love with the practice. Nor think me changed lightly about Mr. Pitt—nobody admired him more—you saw it. When he preferred haughtiness to humanity, glory to peaceful glory—when his disinterestedness could not resist a pension, nor a pension make him grateful—he changed, not I. When he courts a mob, I certainly change ; and whoever does court the mob, whether an orator or a mountebank, whether Mr. Pitt or Dr. Rock¹ are equally contemptible in my eyes.

The fall of Pitt marks an epoch in English history. There was no longer any one in office strong enough to maintain the predominance of Parliament over the Crown. Bute reigned supreme in the Administration as the mouthpiece of George III. Government by the will of the people was to give place to what amounted to personal government on the part of the King.

¹ Richard Rock, a quack doctor.

CHAPTER II

THE KING'S SUPREMACY

The Triumph of George III. and Bute—Newcastle's Disillusionment—Pitt Justified—Capture of Martinique—Fall of Newcastle—The King's Treatment of Him—Bute as Head of the Administration—Peace Negotiations Resumed—Bedford's Mission to Paris—Capture of Havannah—Grenville and Egremont Oppose the King—Grenville's Humiliation—Henry Fox Enters the Cabinet—Bute and Bedford—Final Terms for Peace—Dismissal of Devonshire—Pitt Deserts his Old Colleagues—Bessborough and Rockingham Resign—The King and Bute Mobbed—Pitt's Speech against the Peace—Wholesale Punishment—The Treaty of Paris—Bute's Retirement—Whig Hopes of Pitt—Grenville's Ministry—Wilkes and the *North Briton*—His Trial and Triumph—George III. and Grenville—Negotiations with Pitt—Their Failure—The Grenville-Bedford Administration—Wilke's Duel and Exile.

ALTHOUGH George III. had avenged his grandfather and vastly increased the influence of the Crown, he had still many anxious months to face before he could be sure that a Whig revival would not rob him of the prize which he now saw in view. While Bute remained in the Government the King could rely upon a faithful mouthpiece, but Bute was not prepared to face the continued and increasing hostility of the nation once peace could be established. That, as already stated, was the problem which he had hoped in vain to see solved before dispensing with the services of Pitt, but he was left to unravel the tangled skein with colleagues who were as likely as not to pull in opposite directions. Considering his limitations as a statesman, and the inexperienced youth of his master, it says much for the ingenuity and resource of both that they succeeded in holding their own until there was no longer any doubt regarding the issue. Bute's devotion, indeed, was worthy of a better cause :

LORD BUTE TO LORD MELCOMBE.

[*Manuscripts of Miss M. Eyre Matcham : Historical MSS. Commission.*]

February 10, 1762.

. . . I own, and that without blushing, I have been unfortunate in the means I have for years

taken of cementing friendships and procuring attachments ; others, with much less trouble, perhaps without any honesty, succeed better . . . but I repine not ; conscious of my own feelings, conscious of deserving better treatment, I shall go on, though single and alone, to serve my King and country in the best manner my poor talents will allow me ; happy, too happy, when the heavy burden that I bear shall be removed and placed on other shoulders.

The correspondence of the men who made and marred history in those days shows with singular clearness how events combined to prevent any effective opposition at home to the new policy of the Crown—the policy which led inevitably to the loss of the American colonies. Pitt alone might have saved the situation. Had he thrown himself heart and soul into the Whig Opposition he could have championed the cause of American freedom to good effect. It was Pitt's failure as a domestic statesman that he deserted the Whigs in their hour of need, and left them powerless to attack the King's friends with a solid front in the name of the people. As the leader of the popular party, even in Opposition, he would have carried more weight than any Minister of the Crown. Unfortunately, he had little reason to love his old colleagues, and had no more faith in the party system than had the King himself.

If Newcastle had hoped that, with the retirement of Pitt, his own supremacy was assured, he was quickly undeceived. Bute at once assumed complete control, and replaced Pitt by Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont, brother-in-law of George Grenville, who had declined the post. By the beginning of 1762 the new Ministry had involved the country into the very war with Spain which Pitt's sagacity had already foreseen. These complications did not strengthen Newcastle's tottering position, and the peace negotiations which followed led to fatal differences of opinion with Bute. Victories abroad continued to add to Pitt's popularity and vindicate his warlike policy. The latest triumph was the capture of Martinique, in February, as a result of the expedition projected by that statesman shortly before his resignation :

HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE MONTAGU.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]ARLINGTON STREET, *March 22, 1762.*

. . . The single eloquence of Mr. Pitt, like an annihilated star, can shine many months after it has set. I tell you it has conquered Martinique. If you will not believe me, read the *Gazette*; read Monckton's letter; there is more martial spirit in it than in half Thucydides, and in all the grand Cyrus. Do you think Demosthenes or Themistocles ever raised the Grecian stocks two per cent. in four-and-twenty hours? I shall burn all my Greek and Latin books; they are histories of little people. The Romans never conquered the world till they had conquered three parts of it, and were three hundred years about it; we subdue the globe in three campaigns; and a globe, let me tell you, as big again as it was in their days. . . .

The reception of the news on the Continent may be judged by the following letter:

SIR RICHARD LYTTTELTON TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]ROME, *April 14, 1762.*

My dear Sir,

I cannot forbear congratulating you on the glorious conquest of Martinique, which, whatever effect it may have in England, astonishes all Europe, and fills every mouth with praise and commendation, with applause and admiration, I may say, of the noble perseverance and superior ability of the planner of this great and decisive undertaking, and the heroic ardour and constancy of the combined forces in the achievement. His Holiness [Clement XIII.] yesterday told Mr. Weld, a Roman Catholic Dorsetshire gentleman, who was presented to him, that were not the information such as left no possibility of its being doubted, the news of our success could not have been credited; and that so great was

the national glory and reputation all over the world, that he esteemed it the highest honour to be born an Englishman. And, indeed, the French and Spanish factions had ridiculed the undertaking, and pronounced the attempt to be ruinous and impracticable. My letters from England say, that Mr. Pitt's friends declare, this is the last act of his Administration that he is to derive any honour from. I should think this the language of his enemies at home, for abroad all mankind will give him credit for the consequences of this great event ; and great is the universal expectations of what must follow from the further operations of a force from so many causes irresistible, and so happily collected at this season.

But, sir, if this be the end of your Administration, I shall only say, *finis coronat opus*. I am ever, dear sir,
Most entirely and faithfully yours,

RICHARD LYTTTELTON.

The loss of Martinique was a heavy blow to French influence in the West Indies, leading to the surrender of all the dependent islands. Instead of following up this advantage, and prosecuting the war with vigour all round, as Pitt earnestly urged in Parliament, "as the only way to obtain an honourable, solid and lasting peace," Bute preferred the less heroic path of caution and compromise. He refused to pay Frederick the Great the full subsidy that had been promised him unless he would agree to use it towards bringing the war to a close. This disputed point led to Newcastle's resignation, though he was forced to retire on other grounds as well. Bute treated him abominably, "by such a behaviour in my office," as he complained to Hardwicke, "as hardly any gentleman acted towards another, let him be ever so insignificant : " ¹

Newcastle was now in the not unmerited position of being despised by Bute and hated by Pitt :

Mr. Pitt's behaviour is very remarkable, [he wrote to his other ally, Devonshire, in admitting their combined treachery of the previous year]. It may

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 109.

surprise others ; it does not surprise me ; I have long known his inveteracy to me. I am sure he had nothing to complain of me in the last reign. I have a great deal to complain of him, for his ingratitude for many years. In this reign, I own, I did, in concert with your Grace, and my friends, prefer my Lord Bute to him, and was an insignificant instrument to bring my Lord Bute into the Secretary's office ; I did not think I should have been so soon, and so well, rewarded for it.¹

George III. showed little regard for Newcastle when it was plain to every one that the old Whig leader, in the face of such treatment at the hands of Bute, could no longer cling to office :

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE MARQUESS
OF ROCKINGHAM.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

May 19, 1762.

. . . I was this day at Court. His Majesty was barely civil ; would not do a very right thing in the post-office at the recommendation of my Lord Bessboro' and Mr. Hampden. I desired the King's leave to attend his Majesty some day next week to settle my *private account*, and that I hoped his Majesty would allow me to retire from my employment a day or two after the Parliament rose. His Majesty asked me, whether I should go to Claremont. I said, " Yes ; I might afterwards go to other places." The King did not drop one word of concern at my leaving him, nor even made me a polite compliment, after near fifty years' service, and devotion to the interest of his Royal Family. I will say nothing more of myself but that I believe never *any man* was so dismissed. But all this puts me the more in the right.

The King relented when the resignation actually took place, on which occasion Newcastle gave proof that he was

¹ Add. MSS., 32941, f. 36.

not altogether the corrupt, selfish politician that he is represented by his critics. It may be said that nothing became his Ministry so much as his manner of leaving it. The circumstances are related in his letter to the Duke of Cumberland, once "the Butcher" of Culloden, now a thorn in the side of his nephew, George III., as a leader of that section of the Whigs of which Newcastle was the recognised chief. The old animosity felt by the royal duke for Newcastle—for having espoused the interests of the Princess Dowager on the Regency question, to the prejudice of Cumberland's claims as the second son of George II.—had been buried and the two had lately become reconciled :

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

May 26, 1762.

His Majesty was pleased yesterday to express himself more graciously to me than he had done for some time past. The King was afterwards pleased to speak more directly to the Duke of Devonshire, and said that he knew what I had done for the service of his family—that I had prejudiced my fortune by it ; and therefore he wished the Duke of Devonshire would sound me, whether I would take a pension in any shape, privately or publicly, in any manner I should like.

His Majesty was this day very gracious also. I told the King I came to resign my employment, and return his Majesty my thanks for his gracious offer to me yesterday, and more particularly for what he had said to the Duke of Devonshire. That as I never served his Majesty nor his royal predecessors with any view to the emolument of my employments, I was determined when I was out of his service, not to be any charge to him. That if my fortune had suffered by my zeal for his Majesty's Royal Family, it was my honour, my glory, and my pride ; and the gracious sense his Majesty had expressed of it was all the reward I desired. The King seemed to receive it very graciously ; pressed me again to

accept his offer, which his Majesty said he looked upon as a debt owing to me. To which I made the answer I have mentioned above. The King was pleased, at parting, to say that he could depend on my support, to which I made a bow, and said nothing. I have been so much misunderstood on both sides of that question that I thought it was best to be absolutely silent; as I had twice declared to the King that I could make no promises, nor enter into any engagements upon that head.

As everybody anticipated, Bute became the head of the Administration as First Lord of the Treasury on Newcastle's resignation, and Grenville Secretary of State. A new Chancellor of the Exchequer was found in Sir Francis Dashwood, whose foolhardy journey to Russia in the costume of Charles XII. of Sweden, in the hope of capturing the heart of the Tsarina, had been the least offensive adventure of his degraded youth. Had his knowledge of finance been equal to his experience of vice, there might have been some justification for his appointment, but his financial knowledge was said to be limited to the calculation of bets and tavern bills. It was declared that a sum of five figures was to Dashwood "an impenetrable secret," and his first Budget was received with shouts of contemptuous laughter. Nevertheless the King and Bute had reason to congratulate themselves on the triumph achieved over the old Whig oligarchy. With Pitt, Newcastle, Legge and Hardwicke gone—for Hardwicke no longer attended the meetings of the Cabinet after Newcastle's retirement—the way was smoothed for the supremacy of the Crown. There remained the outspoken voice of public opinion and party politics, the horrified attitude of the Church in regard to which has been recorded by one of the ablest of its Bishops, Warburton of Gloucester :

THE BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER TO [RICHARD
BERENGER ?]

[*Fortescue Papers*, Vol. I. : *Historical MSS. Commission*.]

PRIOR PARK, July 4, 1762.

. . . The licentiousness of party scribblers is the greatest dishonour a learned nation can suffer. I

leave it to our superiors to prevent or punish the civil mischief they occasion. The danger of opposite ambitions may be compared to the fabulous monsters, Scylla and Charybdis, in nothing more truly than in this, that though their upper parts have the traits of humanity, all below have the rage and dissonance of dogs, and apes, and serpents. . . . I am sincerely glad you have got over your share of the late epidemic disorder ; that other, now growing as general, the moral influenza of a party fever, attended with delirium, the goodness of your constitution will always secure you from. Let us private men endeavour to preserve and improve the little we have left of *private virtue* ; and if one of those infected with the influenza of politics should ask me, what then becomes of your *public virtue* ? I would answer him with an old Spanish proverb : *The King has enough for us all.*

The chief difficulty that stood in the way of the Court policy was not so much the political situation at home as the conclusion of international peace. Success continued to follow the operations of the British fleets and armies, but the negotiations of the previous year were resumed. In August the Duke of Bedford was despatched to Paris, and the Duc de Nivernois to London as the accredited agent of the French Government. Bedford's appointment roused a storm of indignation among those who saw in it a desire for peace at any price. In the midst of the bargaining which ensued at both Courts came the news of the victory of the British arms at Havana, which it had been agreed to attack immediately after the declaration of war with Spain. " All the world," wrote Sir Joseph Yorke to Sir Andrew Mitchell, " is struck with the noble capture of Havana, which fell into our hands on the Prince of Wales's birthday, as a just punishment upon the Spaniards for their unjust quarrel with us, and for the supposed difficulties they have raised in the negotiation of peace." ¹ George III. was naturally overjoyed by the birth of his son and heir, but his popularity had so waned since his

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., p. 181.

accession, thanks to his hated Prime Minister as well as his own arbitrary ways, that the nation was far readier to rejoice over the victory at Havana than over the coming of the future George IV. :

The conquest [wrote Richard Rigby to his chief, the Duke of Bedford, on September 30] is the completest ever known—fourteen sail of the line, thirty merchantmen loaded for Europe, three million dollars of the King of Spain, besides immense private treasure. Captain Harvey, with whom I supped at White's, lays Lord Albemarle and Pocock's ¹ share at one hundred and fifty thousand apiece. This event will confirm the Secretaries in their resolution to have an equivalent for it, and I apprehend the Council will now be unanimously of that mind.²

Here Rigby referred to the revolt in the Cabinet raised both by Egremont and his abler brother-in-law, Grenville, against accepting the revised French terms without compensation for Havana. Bute was for accepting the terms as they stood, but on the reception of the news that Havana had fallen admitted to Rigby that "this will infallibly put a new face on the negotiations." He had no intention, however, of allowing the rebels to triumph over him in the Cabinet. When Rigby asked him if the Council could be relied upon he answered: "The King would be obliged, and would talk to his two Secretaries, upon their obedience."³ Grenville and Egremont, to their credit, were not to be shaken in their conviction, even when conducted to George III. in person for that very purpose :

RICHARD RIGBY TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

CANTERBURY, *September 30, 1762.*

In my letter yesterday, I told your Grace that Lord Bute had given me to understand that the King intended to talk to his Secretaries of State upon

¹ Admiral Sir George Pocock commanded the fleet and George Keppel, third Earl of Albemarle, the land forces, at the capture of Havana. The victory cost the British 2,910 men.

² *Bedford Correspondence*, Vol. III., pp. 130—131.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

their scruples, formed since your Grace's departure for Paris, and which lay concealed till that epoch in their doubtful breasts. Accordingly his Majesty undertook that task ; and to express their behaviour upon the occasion, I cannot do better than repeat the King's own words, as he wrote them in a letter to Lord Bute as soon as he had dismissed them ; " Judge," says he, " of Grenville's countenance by that of his brother at the installation." Lord Egremont was wise enough to fly in a passion in the closet, a circumstance not easily forgiven, I believe, by his Majesty, and to tell the King that he had but one sentiment to offer to his Majesty upon the subject, which was, to send the Duke of Bedford certain fixed articles for the preliminaries, upon no event to be changed, and if the French refused to comply with such, immediately to recall his Grace. The King's answer was that his sentiment was totally different from his own ; that a boy of ten years old might have as well been sent to Paris on such an errand ; but that what gave him satisfaction in the Duke of Bedford's having undertaken the negotiation was, that he had the best opinion and reliance upon his head and heart, nor had he a subject on whom he could more safely depend ; in short, he spoke daggers to him, but to no purpose, for I have reason to believe neither he nor his brother Secretary will recede. Indeed, I find Lord Bute has told Mr. Fox this morning that not a single councillor, not even Halifax, will now consent to give up Havana without an equivalent.

Grenville suffered for his convictions by being deprived of his seals as Secretary of State and reduced to the Admiralty in place of Lord Halifax, who succeeded him in the higher post. Why Grenville submitted to this treatment it is difficult to understand, unless, as Mr. Winstanley says in his masterly study of " Personal and Party Government," he " may have been influenced by a desire to continue to act as a check upon Bute's pacific tendencies ; but it is also possible that, knowing as he did that Bute would not be likely to continue long in

power, he had an eye upon the succession, and thought to purchase promotion by enduring humiliation." Bute strengthened his own position most of all by bringing to his support that astute and unscrupulous politician Henry Fox, who, although he declined to succeed Grenville as Secretary of State, accepted a seat in the Cabinet, where he deliberately set to work to purchase a majority for the Crown. That he fully realised the measure of his own unpopularity, as well as that of Bute, is clear from his letter to Bedford announcing his new appointment :

HENRY FOX TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

October 13, 1762.

His Majesty was in great concern lest a good peace in a good House of Commons should be lost, and his authority disgraced, for want of a proper person to support his honest measures, and keep his closet from that force with which it was so threatened. I was that person who could do it : so called upon, he had that good opinion of me to think I would ; and he knew not whom else he could call, if I declined it. I took no time to consider before I answered, that to be Secretary of State too, if the sessions were troublesome, would be impossible for me to undertake. I represented, as to the rest, that it would be adding unpopularity to unpopularity, of which there was enough ; that my name might frighten Tories away, and that an experiment which should fail would make his Majesty's case very disagreeable indeed. I was, with difficulty, excused from being Secretary of State. The rest was insisted upon, or rather asked, in such terms, and in such a manner, that, in short, I was brought to feel it a point of honour to obey. I am very sure that is my motive, because I have nothing either to wish or ask, and most unhappy to leave the quiet life I enjoyed, and shall, I fear, find was necessary to my health. In short, I am this morning declared a Cabinet Councillor, and his Majesty's Minister in the House of Commons. Lord Halifax is Secretary of State, and

George Grenville first Lord of the Admiralty. Your Grace will, I hope, approve of what I have done, and it will be my best endeavour to gain your approbation of whatsoever I shall do. I am an humble imitator of your Grace, and give up a most happy situation to what I think my duty. May my doing so have as much effect in one way, as your Grace's will have in a much greater.

I am, etc.,
H. Fox.

For a time it was comparatively plain sailing for Bute. He had realised that Havana must not be ceded in the final terms of peace without material compensation, and wrote accordingly to Bedford, who had been complaining bitterly of the restrictions imposed upon him by the English Secretaries of State. Man of peace as he was—"Little Englander," as he would be called to-day—no one was quicker to take offence, or resent interference, than John Russell, fourth Duke of Bedford. His follower, Rigby, had warned him against Bute when writing of his dominating influence in the Cabinet :

George Grenville is frightened out of his wits ; he governs Lord Egremont like a child ; and I can positively assure your Grace that his lordship has a cordial hatred for you. This I beg you to depend upon, and to have constantly in your thoughts when you write to him. He will lie and make mischief for the sake of doing so ; you know of old. He improves in those arts ; the only qualifications he has for being a statesman.¹

Bute endeavoured to smooth the Duke's ruffled feathers as well as he could before sending him England's final terms of peace :

THE EARL OF BUTE TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

LONDON, October 24, 1762.

My dear Lord,

I am extremely sorry to observe, by your Grace's of the 20th, that any letter from hence has

¹ Bedford Correspondence.



Emery Walker, photographer

JOHN RUSSELL, FOURTH DUKE OF BEDFORD. K.G.

From the portrait by Thomas Gainsborough in the National Portrait Gallery

given you the least uneasiness. Jealous of your honour, my dear Lord, and bound to support you by every method in my power, forgive me if I say I have not discovered the least intention to offend you. Your Grace knows well that the heads of a Secretary of State's letter are composed of the united opinions of the King's servants, approved by his Majesty. I myself firmly believe the Duke of Choiseul wishes to make peace, and intends it ; but it is fair to presume he would make it as good for his master as he possibly could : Nivernois' memorial, and the project that then alarmed your Grace, prove plainly the truth of my assertion. Your Grace will now perceive by the set of articles sent what opinions are held here, even by those you have in highest esteem ; for I do assure you, I never was present at a more unanimous Cabinet than the one held on Friday ; nor must this surprise your Grace, for such is the change made here by the conquest of Havana, that I solemnly declare I don't meet with one man, let his attachment be never so strong to the service of the King, his wishes for peace never so great, that does not positively affirm, this rich acquisition must not be ceded without satisfaction in the fishery, and some material compensation. This is so much the opinion of all the King's servants that the greatest care has been taken to soften every expression, and to state the lowest terms that peace can possibly be made on ; and notwithstanding all the disadvantage and perplexities that attend the continuation of the war, even these difficulties are preferred to ceding an iota more than is done in the articles now sent. Your Grace will have then our real ultimatum to present to France : happy for both countries if they accept it. What regards them is in nothing altered from the project they had agreed to previous to your Grace's departure. We have explained what relates to the East Indies, and distance to be observed in their fishing ; matters to them of little consequence. With regard to the Spaniards, we have used the

greatest moderation ; our demands are trivial compared with the important conquest we give up : on the whole, therefore, we now desire either a speedy signature, or a plain refusal, determined to prepare for either event. With regard to the happy termination of this great work, I used the term *speedy* from a thorough conviction, that if the King shall not be able in his speech to acquaint Parliament with the preliminaries being signed, the articles once brought into debate, and descanted on by so numerous an assembly, will put it out of the power of this or any other administration, though as well inclined (a thing not likely), to continue negotiations, or make any peace.

Two days later George III. himself helped to clinch matters with a letter which showed Bedford that the limit of concessions had been reached, and that at all costs the negotiations must be settled one way or the other before Parliament could meet. At the earnest request of the Duc de Nivernois, Parliament had been prorogued to November 25 :

GEORGE III. TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

ST. JAMES'S, *October 26, 1762.*

My Lord Duke,

This is so critical a minute both for my own honour and the security of the nation, that I think it necessary to send you these few lines, not to exhort you, for I know your steady and affectionate adherence to my interest, but to declare to you, with my own pen, that after weighing every consequence, I am determined either to make the peace I now send you or to continue the war. I think if the French and Spaniards have not very bad intelligence, they will see the danger run by suffering this to hang till the meeting of my parliament ; the best dispatch, therefore, I can receive from you, and the most essential to my service, will be these preliminaries signed. May Providence, in compassion to human

misery, give you this means of executing this great and noble work, and be assured I will never forget the duty and attachment you show to me in this important crisis.

GEORGE R.

Not content with buying a majority to support the Peace Treaty when it should come before Parliament, everything possible was done still further to humiliate the great Whig Lords who were not prepared to submit their will to the royal authority. The next victim was William Cavendish, fifth Duke of Devonshire—the Prince of the Whigs, as the Princess Dowager had ironically called him before the accession of George III.—a man of the strictest honour, if not of brilliant parts as a statesman. Devonshire, with the King's sanction, had ceased attendance at the Cabinet Councils shortly after Newcastle's retirement, although retaining his office as Lord Chamberlain. Yet he received the King's summons to attend the meeting to consider the final terms of peace—a summons, it is reasonable to assume, sent through Bute in the hope of a refusal which would lead to his downfall. Devonshire, as was expected, begged to be excused ; and although his plea of unfamiliarity with the progress of the negotiations seems to have been accepted, the King refused the Duke an audience when the first opportunity presented itself. The result is seen in Newcastle's letter to Rockingham, who, although at that time a Lord of the Bedchamber, was no supporter of prerogative :

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE MARQUESS
OF ROCKINGHAM.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

NEWCASTLE HOUSE,

October 28, 1762, Thursday at night.

My dear Lord,

This express brings your lordship an account of the most extraordinary event that has happened in any Court of Europe. The Duke of Devonshire went to St. James's (I believe, between you and me) with a design to resign the staff ; but that, neither I

nor any mortal knew, and I am sure was not suspected by the King or Lord Bute. The Duke of Devonshire desired to speak to the King. The page came out and told the Duke of Devonshire that his Majesty had commanded him to tell his Grace *he would not see him*. The Duke then desired to know to whom His Majesty would have him deliver his staff? His Majesty sent him word by the same page that he would send his orders to the Duke of Devonshire. My Lord Duke has since been with my Lord Egremont, and has delivered to him his key and staff. I believe there never was such a behaviour to the first and best subject the King has. It must affect all the nobility, and all those who can approach his Majesty. Had I any call to it I know what I should do to-morrow.

Indeed, my dear Lord, these violences are very alarming, and the more as in this instance they are exercised upon one who the last time the King saw him at the installation was treated by his Majesty with the greatest seeming confidence and regard, and I know the Duke of Devonshire went to the Bath under the delusion that he was *personally* particularly well with the King, and never heard otherwise *from the Court* till he met with this treatment at St. James's.

On the day of the Duke of Devonshire's retirement his brother, Lord George Cavendish, followed suit by delivering up his wand as Comptroller of the Household. "He was as ill used in the closet as his brother, who was not permitted to come there," adds Newcastle to the above letter. "All the King said to Lord George was, 'If a person wants to resign his staff I don't desire he should keep it.' His Majesty gave his head a toss back and retired towards the window to set the staff down, and that is all that passed." There was now no mistaking the King's intentions. He had thrown down the gauntlet as a champion of prerogative, and those who resisted its encroachments must do so at their peril. The only hope of political promotion and reward was to become

one of the "King's friends" in order to make his will supreme.

Against these privileged forces the disordered ranks of the Whigs were powerless without Pitt, the one commanding statesman who might have united their scattered strength into an Opposition too popular and powerful to be defied. Pitt, however, preferred the faded splendour of isolation. He had not yet forgiven Newcastle, and had a rooted objection to the tactics of a regular Opposition, so that when the Duke of Cumberland visited him on behalf of his old colleagues at this crisis, he declined to join them. Pitt protested on this occasion against what he described as Bute's "transcendency of power," by which he "insulted the nobility, intimidated the gentry, and trampled on the people," but declared that he did not well see what could be done, since Newcastle, Devonshire and Hardwicke had all been so disposed to the peace, which now seemed final. "If others had been as firm as himself," he told Cumberland, "things would not have been brought to their present crisis." Then, after criticising the terms of peace, he expressed that disapproval of factious politics which accounted for his disastrous failure as a domestic statesman :

Mr. Pitt . . . expressed his apprehension that the distinction of Whig and Tory was rising as high as ever ; that he lay under great obligations to many gentlemen who had been of the denomination of Tories, but who, during his share of the administration, had supported government upon the principles of Whiggism and of the Revolution ; that he would die a Whig, and support invariably those principles ; yet he would concur in no proscriptive measures ; and though it was necessary Lord Bute should be removed from the office he now held, he might not think it quite for his Majesty's service to have the Duke of Newcastle succeed there : begging that this might not be thought to proceed from any resentment to the Duke of Newcastle, for whose person he had real regard, and who perhaps might have as much cause to complain of Mr. Pitt, as Mr. Pitt of

his Grace. With regard to himself, he had felt inexpressible anxieties at holding office against the goodwill of the Crown; that he would never put himself again in that situation, nor accept of any employment whilst his Majesty had that opinion of him which he was acquainted with.¹

Some of the Whig leaders, however, dared openly to oppose the Crown at this juncture besides Devonshire and his brother. Lord Bessborough resigned the office of Paymaster on hearing of the insult to Devonshire, and the Marquess of Rockingham that of Lord of the Bedchamber. George III. accepted Rockingham's resignation with the curtness with which he had treated Lord George Cavendish a few days previously :

THE MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM TO THE DUKE
OF CUMBERLAND.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

November 3, 1762.

Sir,

After the repeated instances of your Royal Highness's condescension towards me, I hope it will not appear presumption in me to take the liberty to inform your Royal Highness of the motives and manner of my conduct.

The late treatment of the Duke of Devonshire seemed to me, in the strongest light, fully to explain the intention and the tendency of all the domestic arrangements. I, therefore, had the honour of an audience of his Majesty on Wednesday morning, wherein I humbly informed his Majesty, that it was with great concern that I saw the tendency of the counsels which now had weight with him: that this event fully showed the determination that those persons who had hitherto been always the most steadily attached to his Royal predecessors, and who had hitherto deservedly had the greatest weight in this country, were now driven out of any share in the government in this country, and marked out

¹ *Rockingham Memoirs.*

rather as objects of his Majesty's displeasure than of his favour : that the alarm was general among his Majesty's most affectionate subjects, and that it appeared to me in this light ;—it might be thought, if I continued in office, that I either had not the sentiments which I declared, or that I disguised them, and acted a part which I disclaimed.

His Majesty's answer was short ; saying that he did not desire any person should continue in his service any longer than it was agreeable to him.

Most of the other Whigs of note had been absorbed by the King's friends. " It is but too true," complained Newcastle in writing to Hardwicke of these desertions, " what Mr. Fox said at first, ' My Lord Bute has got over all the Duke of Newcastle's friends.' Never was man who had it in his power to serve, to make, to choose, so great a part of the members of both Houses, so abandoned as I am." ¹ Meantime the King, on November 3, had gone the length of striking out the Duke of Devonshire's name from the list of Privy Councillors, in spite of Bute's wiser counsel to the contrary. Public opinion expressed itself in no uncertain voice at the State opening of Parliament on November 25. The King then made his first appearance in his new State coach, which, built at a cost of £8,000, proved an immense attraction to the crowd ; but this was not the only explanation of the enormous gathering on that occasion. " Such a mob," wrote one eyewitness to Sir Andrew Mitchell, " was perhaps never seen in our time between Charing Cross and Westminster Hall. The King's magnificent new coach might be supposed to have brought them together ; but what kept them there after the coach had gone back is perhaps not so satisfactory to think of. In short, Lord Bute was insulted, both going and coming from the House ; and, towards evening, some soldiers were called in to support the constables in the discharge of their duty in clearing the streets, so that the members might get away." ² Rigby sent his chief a full account of these riotous scenes :

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, p. 152.

² Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., pp. 194, 195.

RICHARD RIGBY TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

ST. JAMES'S PALACE, November 26, 1762.

My dear Lord,

This morning, by Walker, I received the favour of your Grace's letter of the 22nd, and at noon the guns at the Tower and in the park proclaimed the arrival of the ratifications. I am sorry that you should meet with any vexation in any part of the correspondence with the Secretary of State, at the winding up of your glorious work ; but admire the philosophy with which you despise it, and which I hope you will preserve. It was odd enough after receiving your Grace's letter this morning, describing his Lordship's letter to you, that Lord Egremont should take me aside before dinner and ask me how the Duke of Bedford and he were to be together ; my answer was, that I hoped you would be perfect good friends. I have not had time to talk to Lord Bute yet upon the contents of your letter, but depend upon it I will not fail to do it. To-day, indeed, I believe your Grace will think it would not have been a very proper season to have talked much to him upon foreign affairs, considering what treatment he met with yesterday at home ; it must poison the joy which even the arrival of the ratifications gave him. The great curiosity of seeing the King's new coach yesterday had filled the park and streets, by all accounts, fuller than they were at the Coronation. I was above three hours upon the road from the end of Pall Mall to the middle of Parliament Street, where I was obliged at last to get into a chair and be carried a back way to the House of Commons. In this crowd Lord Bute was very much insulted, hissed in every gross manner, and a little pelted. It is said, but it is denied also, that the King was insulted. Both Houses were up about four ; the crowd of coaches and mob on foot not the least abated ; it was so great that the King's coach, with his Majesty in it, upon his return from the House

was a full hour in Palace Yard. Lord Bute, to avoid the like treatment he had met in going, returned in a hackney chair, but the mob discovered him, followed him, broke the glasses of the chair, and, in short, by threats and menaces, put him very reasonably in great fear; if they had once overturned the chair, he might very soon have been demolished. Your Grace, perhaps, thinks I am writing from Dublin, but I am in London, the capital of the world, renowned for arts and sciences, bull-dogs and fighting cocks. The inside of the Houses of Parliament resembled rather more a civilised people. The addresses of both Houses were unanimous; nothing said in the House of Peers but by Egremont and Weymouth, who moved and seconded: and, it is said, Weymouth did remarkably well. After Lord Carysfort had moved, and Lord Charles seconded, in our house, a crazy Mr. Nicholson Calvert said a little and abused the Peace, but his abuse was received in the coldest manner.

Beckford then very faintly animadverted upon part of the preliminaries, for which Charles Townshend very smartly reprehended him as not combining the whole of it together; he was very short, and ended in saying the present time was improper till we had them before us to be debating about them. Enough, however, appeared to show that the opposition to the Peace will be very trifling. What the Duke of Newcastle and H.R.H. [Duke of Cumberland] and the rest of them have in store that makes them keep up their spirits, I cannot conceive; nothing can be more sanguine at the same time than our friends on the other side, for Mr. Fox told me to-day the opposition would never divide sixty; and he would show me what my friend the Duke of Newcastle's interest was without the Court. They have changed their measure about resigning, and that is all stopped. Lord Orford is to have the parks.¹

¹ The appointment seems to have been made with the view of gaining his uncle, Horace Walpole. It failed, as may be seen in the

Many people think the mob which I have described above was an hired one for the purpose ; the cry against his lordship was certainly not universal, and the people who hooted at him attended him as he went along. Pitt remains in the country, and Lord Temple does not come to town till after Christmas. It is said, he too is in a dying condition.

Lord Tavistock moved a message to-day in the House of Commons, to thank the Queen for her little Prince,¹ and he and some more members wait upon her Majesty to-morrow with it. I am glad she will see them to-morrow, for his lordship did not like being prevented of his hunting at Dunstable next Monday ; though, if I guess right, he will still be hindered going by the preliminaries being laid before Parliament on that day.

I am sorry my cider does not please the pretty palate of the Duchess of Choiseul ; I will mend my hand, and send her half a hogshead of the richest which can possibly be got.

No doubt such proofs of unpopularity decided Bute to adhere to his determination to retire as soon as peace should be concluded. The debate over the preliminaries was fixed to begin on December 9, and was expected to be a stormy one —“ that is,” as Chesterfield wrote to his son, “ if Mr. Pitt takes an active part ; but if he is pleased, as the Ministers say he is, there is no other Æolus to blow a storm. The Dukes of Cumberland, Newcastle, and Devonshire have no better troops to attack with, than the militia ; but Pitt alone is *ipse agmen*.”² The friends of the Great Commoner begged him to crush the “ precipitated peace,” as it was called in the

amusing correspondence in Walpole’s “ Memoirs of George III.,” Vol. I., p. 217 : “ Lord Orford never gave the Government a vote afterwards, continuing in the country as if they had given him nothing.” He was the only son of the eldest son of Sir Robert Walpole, a handsome, reckless, dissolute young man, whose failings, the result of a disordered mind, his uncle need not have recorded. Having died unmarried, his title descended to his uncle, with whom expired the male line of Sir Robert Walpole.—Bedford Correspondence.

¹ George Augustus Frederick, after George IV., born on August 12, 1762.

² Chesterfield Letters.

following letter from the Hon. Thomas Hervey, second son of the first Earl of Bristol :

THE HON. THOMAS HERVEY TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

BOND STREET, December 5, 1762.

My dear Sir,

If any power were left me, either of mind or body, for such a disquisition, I could write very copiously to you concerning the present crisis. When I read the preliminaries of our precipitated peace, I could not avoid saying, to myself at least, what Antony says over the corpse of his friend Cæsar—Alas, great Pitt! are all thy conquests, trophies, spoils, shrunk to this little measure? For truth's sake, for your reputation's sake, and, above all, for the sake of your many staunch and invariable friends, recompense the cordial compliment I am making you, by testifying to the public, that you think with me upon this important measure.

Exclusive of the considerations I have mentioned to you, the vanity of your opposition is as visible to me, as the vanity of all things was to Solomon; and therefore it is to be hoped, that you will not abide the issue of my prediction, till, like him, you find it verified by the test of experience. Had the Duke of Newcastle quitted his employment at the time of your resignation, his Grace had then made one right judgment of things before he died; and might have succeeded in that, which is not at present to be effected.

What part you intend to take upon this emergency is a point that puzzles our ablest politicians. New rumours and surmises are almost daily set on foot and circulated, and they are agreed in nothing, but their impatience for the event. You are still beloved and revered by the patriot band, and still possessed of a dignity never conferred on any other man; that of being deemed, and even called, the people's minister. Your own firmness will keep firm this

glorious basis ; and as long as you continue to rest and build upon it, they that do not love you must ultimately find it necessary to have you. I am telling you these things, as the last efforts of my friendship ; for I am wasting my life in such incessant constraint and pain, that, if you loved me as well as you do your wife and children, you would not wish the duration of it. Adieu.

THO. HERVEY.

Notwithstanding a violent attack of gout, Pitt attended the debate on the 9th. Since, however, he did not combine with the Opposition, all his eloquence was so much wasted breath. In order to win him over to their side, Newcastle and his supporters in the Lords had agreed to condemn the preliminaries in part, but their attack was half-hearted, and the preliminaries were approved in the Upper House without a division. Pitt on his part made a memorable speech in the Commons, lasting between three and four hours. In his sweeping condemnation he did not hesitate to attack the articles to which Newcastle and his colleagues had themselves agreed before leaving the Cabinet. He declared that although he was at that instant suffering under the most excruciating torture, he had determined, at the hazard of his life, to attend that day to raise up his voice, his hand, and his arm against the preliminary articles of a treaty which obscured all the glories of the war, surrendered the dearest interests of the nation, and sacrificed the public faith by abandoning our allies. He proceeded to analyse every part of the stipulations, which he stigmatised in general with unqualified censure. The only particulars which met his approbation were the dereliction of North America by the French and the restitution of Minorca. He expatiated at great length on the German connection, and affirmed that the desertion of the King of Prussia was insidious, tricking, base and treacherous. In conclusion he said that he saw in the terms of the proposed treaty the seeds of a future war. The peace was insecure, because it restored the enemy to her former greatness ; it was inadequate, because the places retained were no equivalent for those surrendered.

So enfeebled was Pitt at the beginning of his speech that he had to be supported by two of his friends, but, the pain increasing as he proceeded, he was allowed the unprecedented indulgence of continuing his speech sitting. Towards the close he could scarcely be heard, and was at length forced to leave in agony before the division. His effort had been in vain. Though the mob cheered him to the echo as he left the House, the Government majority in the Commons that day was 319 to 65. Bute and the party of peace had reason to congratulate themselves. Their satisfaction is expressed in a letter in which the Member for Downton, in Wiltshire, announced the result of the day's debate to Mr. Neville, who was in Paris with the Duke of Bedford :

JAMES HAYES TO RICHARD NEVILLE.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

*Friday morning, past 1 o'clock.
December 10, 1762.*

I am just got home from the House of Commons, and tired to death with a very bad debate, except the part Mr. Pitt took in it, who is always great, and in some parts of his speech upon this occasion as great as ever he was in his life. Partly standing and partly sitting, he spoke for three hours and twenty minutes : he commended you for the article concerning Canada ; in all the other articles, I think he condemned the preliminaries, insisting that better terms were offered last year, though our circumstances then were not so good as now ; for against the distress of Portugal, he set Martinique, the Havana, some successes by our army in Germany, and the King of Prussia, who is, he thinks, by this peace used most scandalously ill. Nobody beside him spoke a word against the preliminaries worth remembering ; and in my poor judgment, nobody said so much and so well for the peace as Mr. Stanley, to whom Mr. Pitt made the highest compliments imaginable. It is late and I am sleepy ; I will therefore say no more in this, than that I was happy, as much, I can assure you, on your account as any

other, in being in a majority of 319 against 65. I can't conclude without adding this, that I think I have in no day for two months past heard less said against the peace than this day. In the House of Lords, which was up about 10 o'clock, there was no division. The Commons' address of thanks and approbation is very strong. I heartily congratulate you on this strong parliamentary sanction.

On the second day, when the address was voted, the Opposition majority fell to 63, and the victory of the administration was complete :

RICHARD RIGBY TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[Bedford Correspondence.]

ST. JAMES'S PALACE,

Monday, December 13, 1762.

Upon the whole our peace has passed through both Houses, as it ought to do, triumphantly : as the opposers of it deserve, ignominiously and disgracefully for them ; and it is followed by the certain consequence of such conduct,—disunion amongst this miserable opposition themselves, who are separating already to their several counties. His Royal Highness [Cumberland] is gone to Windsor for a fortnight ; Lord Temple returns to Stow to-day ; the Duke of Devonshire goes to Bath on Wednesday ; our poor old friend the Duke of Newcastle, I believe does not know where to go ; and Lord Hardwicke is trying to go to the President's Place already, as is said. Lord Granville is declining so fast, he can't last many weeks. Charles Townshend, though he has resigned Secretary at War, says he shall support the Court, and won't be long before he has what he wants, I imagine : and the young Whigs, as these silly hot boys are called, are all that are left, with old Tommy Townshend and Henry Legge for dry nurses to support this formidable opposition in Parliament. As for the House of Lords, Lord Bute's speech, which

even the Duke of Cumberland owns to be one of the finest he ever heard in his life, will tend as much as anything to keep Opposition quiet there, as people will find he is able to defend himself. That ability will enliven others, and perhaps as much as anything contribute to bring out that great and spirited defence of the peace which came from the Chief Justice.

Now this great affair is over in Parliament, I suppose, and the world expects there will be many removals, and they certainly deserve to be made examples of. I hope no military men may be turned out ; but I would clear away in the civil employments. Your Grace shall have such intelligence as I can pick up from time to time ; perhaps there may be some to-day. I am going to Court with our address of the House of Commons, and will not seal my letter till my return.

4 o'clock Monday afternoon—I found Fox at Court, with whom I had an hour's conversation. Nothing final is determined ; but I have reason to believe there will be a general déroute, from the Duke of Grafton's Lieutenancy of the county of Suffolk to the underlings in the Custom-house ; and I think if military men are excepted, as I hope they will be, the measure entirely right. I hope your Grace will be of my opinion.

Flushed with triumph, the Government proceeded, as Rigby foretold, to punish the Opposition leaders to the utmost extent of their powers, beginning with the dismissal from their Lord-Lieutenancies of Newcastle, Rockingham, and Grafton. Newcastle was also deprived of the Stewardship of Sherwood Forest. Deeply indeed must the old Duke have now regretted his betrayal of Pitt, sixteen months previously, for the fatal alliance with Bute, who despised him. "At present," wrote Mr. Symmers to Sir Andrew Mitchell on the last day of 1762, "we have nothing to talk of but changes, which fall heavy on the Duke of Newcastle's party. All those of his Grace's friends whom he has drawn into opposition

with him are, or will be, turned out. It moves one to compassion to think of the poor old Duke himself—a man once possessed of twenty-five thousand pounds per annum of landed estate, with eleven thousand pounds in emoluments of government, now reduced to an estate of scarcely six thousand per annum, and going into retirement (not to say sinking into contempt) with not so much as a feather in his cap, and but such a circle of friends as he has deprived of their places. The three lieutenancies he had, the last things he continued to hold, have this last week been all taken from him ! ” ¹

In a letter of condolence to Newcastle on the loss of his lieutenancies, the Duke of Devonshire wrote : “ I am pleased with a *bon-mot* that I am told is in one of the papers (for I never read them), namely, that the Ministers have turned out everybody your Grace brought in, except the King.” ² Devonshire, shrewdly suspecting that a similar humiliation was intended for himself, and scorning Fox’s offer to make a point of saving him, took the dignified course of sending in his resignation as Lord-Lieutenant of Durham to the new Secretary of State :

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE TO THE EARL OF
HALIFAX.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

December 30, 1762.

The removal of the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Rockingham from the Lieutenancies of their respective counties, appearing to me a clear indication that his Majesty does not think fit that those who have incurred his displeasure should continue his Lord Lieutenants, and, as I have the misfortune to come within that description, his Majesty having been advised to show me the strongest marks of his displeasure that could possibly be shown to any subject, I look upon it as a respect due to my sovereign, and I owe it to myself, not to continue any longer in such an office. I must therefore beg the favour of your

¹ Chatham Correspondence.

² *Rockingham Memoirs*, Vol. I., p. 155.

Lordship to carry to the King my resignation of the Lord Lieutenancy and Custos Rotulorum of the County of Derby.

Not content with attacking the obnoxious leaders, the administration wreaked vengeance also upon their underlings and supporters, turning out a host of minor officials and old servants—down even to the humblest door-keepers—who, for no fault of their own, were thus left without a livelihood. Fox was blamed by Bute for this heartless persecution, but the whole administration justly deserved the unpopularity in which such conduct involved it. Devonshire, like Newcastle, felt keenly the cruelties inflicted upon the dependents. "The turning out of inferior officers, persons that are not in Parliament, and can have given no offence," he wrote to Rockingham on December 26, "is a cruel, unjust, and unheard of proceeding, and will most undoubtedly do the ministers no good, but on the contrary, create a general odium against them. As to one set of men endeavouring to throw it upon the other, I look upon it as mere artifice, for measures of this kind cannot be done but in concert, and therefore I pay no regard to what they say on the subject, and only wish the time was come to retaliate upon them, and that they may have ample justice done them. I have wrote my mind fully to the Duke of Newcastle, that we should if possible keep our people quiet for some time ; wait for events, and see what steps the Ministers take : if they propose anything that is wrong, oppose it ; if not, let them alone, by which means we shall gain time to collect our strength, and see whom we can depend upon ; if we can get leaders and a tolerable corps of troops, I am for battle ; but I am against appearing in a weak opposition, as we shall make an insignificant figure, prejudice our friends, and do no good." ¹

Newcastle declared himself almost heart-broken by the cruelties inflicted upon his friends and dependents, and was thrown into a fever which confined him to bed at the beginning of the New Year. The persecutions continued, however, as may be seen from the following letter written after his recovery :

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., pp. 152-3.

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE TO THE EARL OF
HARDWICKE.[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

January 24, 1763.

I send your Lordship the most cruel and inhuman list that was ever seen, not only in a free country, nor even in any civilized nation. This list, as I understand, was sent to the Custom House on Saturday last, and yet, cruel as it is, we are told it is only their *first fire*, and that we are to have a *second*; and what favours that opinion is, that they seem hitherto to have gone through only the Port of London, and the poor unhappy County of Sussex. Their brutality and inhumanity may have satisfied, in some measure, their revenge. But if they meant by it to promote their interests in our county, I can assure them it will have a quite different effect.

The Duke of Devonshire was so kind as to come hither on Saturday, and indeed his conversation was a great relief and comfort to me. The repeated proofs he gave me of his friendship, his manly way of talking and acting upon these cruelties committed upon me and my friends, and his resolution to let all the world know his detestation of them, will and must have an effect upon all honest men. . . . There is not one single man turned out, against whom the slightest complaint can be made, in the execution of their office. Most of them were excellent officers. I find several of my friends are determined to mention these cruelties in their speeches in the House of Commons. I hope they will be supported by men of more weight and experience than themselves. . . .

In the meanwhile the peace negotiations were drawing to a close. On February 10, after one or two postponements, the definitive Treaty of Paris was signed, and transmitted to George III. the same day.¹ Arriving with it in London five

¹ The final terms of the Peace of Paris are summarised in Mr. A. Wyatt Tilby's history of "The American Colonies": "Both England and France agreed to refrain from taking any further part in the German contest. Minorca was exchanged for Belleisle. The naval works at Dunkirk, which threatened England, were to be

days later, Neville was received by the King with great eagerness. At the Levée he was spoken to by His Majesty "most obligingly," as Neville wrote to Bedford afterwards. "He enquired very much after your Grace and said it would have been a great misfortune had the gout postponed the signing of such a peace. I could not help telling His Majesty you had protested you would have signed with your teeth, sooner than have delayed a work you knew would be so agreeable to His Majesty. Though the King took this with seeming approbation, I feared, upon recollection, it would have been thought improper. But the contrary has happened. I was overhead, and *mon esprit* as much admired as it would have been at Versailles, or upon the Pont Neuf." ¹

Lord Bute sent his congratulations to Bedford with those of the King :

THE EARL OF BUTE TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

LONDON, February 16, 1763.

My dear Lord,

Before I offer my own congratulations, I am by his Majesty's immediate order to express to your Grace the King's entire satisfaction in the great work

demolished. In America, France ceded Canada, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, with the stipulation that the Roman Catholics of Canada should be free to exercise their religion, and permission given for such as chose to leave the country and transport their goods within the next eighteen months. The boundaries of Louisiana, which still belonged to France, were defined. The French retained the right of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, together with possession of the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, as a shelter for their fishermen, on condition of never raising any batteries, or maintaining more than fifty soldiers as a guard. The islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Lucia were restored ; but Tobago, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Grenada remained to England. In Africa the French relinquished Senegal, but recovered Goree. In India they recovered their factories and settlements in Bengal, on condition of keeping no troops and raising no fortifications there. It was further agreed that any conquests in any part of the globe not yet known should be restored without compensation. In the event the Philippines were returned to Spain, while Florida was given to England in exchange for Havana : in recompense for which loss to Spain France was to cede Louisiana to the latter. All the Spanish claims on England were rejected."—A. WYATT TILBY, *The American Colonies, 1583-1763* (Constable, 1908), pp. 278-9.

¹ Bedford Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 202.

you have now concluded, and his Majesty's fullest approbation of your Grace's able conduct in the execution of the important trust committed to your care. The King, my Lord, bids me tell you that we will never forget the essential service you have rendered his Crown on this occasion. And now my dear Lord, suffer me to mix my joy with yours, and to assure you that I feel on this great proof of your Grace's firmness and ability, more, much more, than I can express, and that both as a public man and as the Duke of Bedford's most sincere and affectionate friend. This most triumphant peace, exceeding even the preliminaries, will silence faction and baffle all the arts of implacable, designing men, and your Grace will be deservedly the idol of your country, and your character held in veneration by every honest man and well-wisher to his country.

Bedford would willingly have been spared the congratulations of the man whom he believed to be his worst enemy, and responsible for the fact that in the closing stages of the negotiations the French were aware of the true intent of his instructions. Here, however, he was wrong, for this last piece of treachery had been due to the trickery of Nivernois' secretary in London. Bedford showed his resentment by refusing the Presidency of the Council when Bute, now that his task was ended, decided to abandon office, convinced that it would be better for every one concerned if he retired.

THE EARL OF BUTE TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

LONDON, *April 2, 1763.*

My dear Lord,

I am now going to trouble your Grace for the last time, in all probability, on politics, as I shall be out of office, and a private man before I can be honoured with any return: the subject I am going to touch forces me to write about myself much more than I wished to do, and for this reason, I hope you will excuse it. To enter therefore, into matters, I take the liberty of observing to your Grace, that when

the Duke of Newcastle went out and I found myself under a necessity to accept my present situation, I did it with the utmost reluctance ; and nothing but the King's safety and independency could have made me acquiesce in a way of life so opposite to every feeling ; nor did I kiss the King's hand till I had received his solemn promise to be permitted to go out when peace was once attained. Thanks to kind Providence and your Grace's abilities, that day is now come, and well it is so, for independent of all other private considerations, the state of my health is such, and any constant application to business is declared to be so fatal to me, that I find myself under the unpleasant necessity of putting my much-loved Sovereign in mind of his promise. I have done so, and after scenes that I can never forget, his tenderness for me has got the better of his partiality to my poor endeavours to serve him, and he approves my determination. Since this I have often talked with his Majesty on the subject of a new administration, and he is come to the final resolution of putting the Treasury into Mr. Grenville's hands, as the only person in the House of Commons in whom he can confide so great a trust ; Mr. Fox having taken the King's word when he first entered on the management of his affairs, that the peace made, he might be permitted to go to the House of Lords. Three things the King is determined to abide by, and to make the basis of his future administration ; as they have been of his present.

1st. Never upon any account to suffer those Ministers of the late reign who have attempted to fetter and enslave him ever to come into his service while he lives to hold the sceptre.

2ndly. To collect every other force, and above all, that of your Grace and Mr. Fox to his councils and support.

3rdly. To show all proper countenance to the country gentlemen acting on Whig principles, and on those principles only supporting his government.

It is proposed to offer Mr. Townshend the Admiralty, Lord Granby, Ireland ; and now, my Lord, I am desired by his Majesty, who has directed the contents of this letter, earnestly to press your Grace to preside at his councils, the King intending to give (in that case) the Privy Seal to Lord Gower. And now, my dear Lord, need I make use of many arguments to prevail on the Duke of Bedford to assist his young Sovereign with his weight and name,—that Sovereign who has not a wish but what terminates in this country's happiness, and who, since he mounted the Throne, has shown ever the highest regard and predilection for the Duke of Bedford ; who, from the state of my health, is now to form a new government that will have to struggle, not in my opinion with a very formidable Opposition, but with titles and estates, and names like a Pitt and Legge, that impose on an ignorant populace who are every hour declaring this great peace, this salvation of an almost ruined country, *dishonourable, inadequate, unwise, hollow, &c.*, and have endeavoured with the utmost malice to arraign all honest men who had any hand in it. Shall such men give this prince the law, and will the Duke of Bedford look tamely on when loudly called on to defend his King and country, and the cause of truth and honour ? I hope not ; I hope even your Grace will not be displeased to find me expatiate so long on such a point ; but I hope to be excused both from the importance of it, and the anxiety with which I have orders to mention it. I know Lord Egremont has orders to send your Grace permission to come over, and I am particularly directed to insinuate that the sooner your conveniency permits it in the present case the better.

Having thus obeyed my orders, I beg leave to add a few words more concerning myself. Far be it from me to think that I am in any shape necessary to the King's government, or that my place cannot be even much better supplied by any other arrangement :

but I do not stop here. I am firmly of opinion that my retirement will remove the only unpopular part of government, *pascitur in vivis livor, post fata quiescat* ; and I once gone, it will be very hard for me to believe that the Duke of Newcastle will, with Lord Hardwicke, &c., continue a violent or peevish Opposition in order to make Lord Temple, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Legge, Ministers of this country—the sole purpose he now declares he has in view. I fondly hope, therefore, I shall, in my retiring, do my royal master much more service than I could have performed by continuing in office. But this letter exceeds all bounds ; I therefore end it with desiring your Grace to accept my hearty thanks for all the instances I have received of your friendship, and to believe that on the word of an honest man, I have never once ceased since his Majesty's accession to treat your Grace's interest as my own, and to do everything in my power to convince you of the high regard with which I am, and ever shall be, &c., &c.

There is no need to disbelieve Bute's repeated assertions that he had taken the reins of government against his will, and with the definite understanding that he might retire as soon as he had concluded the task of bringing the war to a close. From his point of view he had served the King and country well. With his help, George III. had escaped the yoke of the Whigs against which his immediate predecessors had chafed in vain ; and in the broken state of the Opposition there seemed no longer any question as to his power to rule as well as to reign. Although Pitt had denounced the Peace the nation as a whole was weary of eternal warfare, and failed to respond, though suspecting that the disproportionate amount of concessions secured by France could only be accounted for by betrayal on the part of Bute. The cider tax in the spring of this year roused the public indignation to far greater heights than the Peace of Paris, and was only carried after a struggle which threatened to unite the scattered forces of the Opposition. Pitt was drawn from his retreat on this occasion, and having broken a lance with the

Tories, led friends and foes alike to believe that he meant at last to throw in his lot with his old colleagues :

On Monday [wrote Rigby to Bedford, on March 10] Pitt came to the House again, and fell most unmercifully upon George Grenville, who made rather a tedious digression from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion, in the doing which he treated Pitt's ideas of economy and national expense pretty severely. The other replied, and belaboured him with ridicule, and wit, and misrepresentation, beyond what I ever heard him do before. He served the whole body of the Tories in the same manner, pitying them for their understandings and their acquiescence ; advising them not to be too much in a hurry *to have done with him*, as he called it, for he should certainly have them again, and very soon ; that he had never given up his opinion to them, though they had theirs frequently to him, which he told them would be the way, too, that he should have them again ; assuring them that all he was doing was for their good, though they were not yet sensible of it. George Grenville got up very warm to reply to him when the other with the most contemptuous look and manner I ever saw, rose from his seat, made the chairman a low bow, and walked slowly out of the House. In short, so much ingenuity and insolence I never saw or heard before. This was a prelude to a great coalition dinner at the Duke of Devon's the next day, where Pitt and Temple met the Dukes of Newcastle, Grafton, and Portland, Marquis of Rockingham, Lord Hardwicke, and, I believe, Legge, who are now coalesced against the administration. Their countenances are quite cleared up since they have put themselves under Pitt's management.¹

Exactly what happened at that coalition dinner has never transpired, but it was obvious that Pitt, now that peace, for good or ill, was signed beyond repair, was prepared to wipe

¹ Bedford Correspondence, Vol. III., pp. 218-9.

out old scores against his former allies. It is possible that the prospect of this formidable coalition hastened Bute's retirement. Another theory is that he could no longer afford to risk the hatred of the people. "The alarms of Lord Bute's family about his personal safety," wrote Lord Royston to Hardwicke from Bath on April 11, "are reported here to be the immediate cause of this sudden and unexpected abdication."¹ In any case, Bute did not hand over the reins of office without leaving the Government remodelled on lines which he fondly hoped would ensure the continuance of the same system. He made an attempt to bind Pitt to the Crown by offering him a place in the new administration, but he failed. "Mr. Pitt mentioned the proposals made to him by my Lord Bute," wrote Newcastle to Hardwicke on June 30, "and that his answer was that he never would have anything to do with my Lord Bute; that he is now thoroughly connected with us; was determined to remain so, and to take all opportunities to do everything to bring us together."²

Fox also, though reluctantly—more to please his wife than anything else—declined to fill the breach made by Bute, and when he entered the Upper House as the first Lord Holland he retained his post at the Pay Office. The choice accordingly fell upon George Grenville, but merely, in the first place, as a stop-gap, for Grenville enjoyed neither the confidence of the King nor the support of the people.

A fortnight after the formation of the new Ministry—"the worst administration that has governed England since the Revolution," according to Macaulay—appeared the famous No. 45 of the *North Briton*, in which John Wilkes made his violent attack upon the King's speech at the prorogation on April 19, describing it as "the most abandoned instance of ministerial effrontery, not to be paralleled in the annals of this country." Although Wilkes had not taken much part in the parliamentary debates as member for Aylesbury, he had become a thorn in the side of the King's Friends since he started the *North Briton*. An extreme Whig, and ardent follower of Pitt, he now set himself up as a champion of Liberty. It was unfortunate for his cause that his ideas of

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 165.

² *Ibid.*, p. 169.

Liberty had extended in private life to the licentiousness of the infamous brotherhood of Medmenham Abbey, and the obscenity of such privately-printed works as his "Essay on Woman." These turned-down pages in his life were, however, unknown to the world at large at the time of his arrest for the offending number of the *North Briton*. His abuse of the Government in general, and of Bute in particular, made him the hero of the hour as soon as it was known that he had been arrested under a general warrant from the Secretary of State's office, and committed to the Tower, in spite of his parliamentary privilege of freedom from imprisonment. Lord Temple and the Duke of Grafton, among other sympathisers, were refused admittance to him. Thereupon Temple moved for a writ of *habeas corpus* in the Court of Common Pleas, over which his friend, the Lord Chief Justice Pratt, presided, and the case was fixed for May 3. Just before the trial Wilkes wrote to Grafton and Temple to know whether he could rely upon them for bail. The correspondence on the subject may be left to speak for itself :

JOHN WILKES TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

["*Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton.*"]

TOWER, May 3, 1763.

My Lord,

I want words to express the gratitude of my heart to your Grace for the honour of your regards to me here. I suffer in the cause of Liberty, of which your Grace has already stood forth the great protector. If it is thought advisable for me to put in bail, in order to recover my liberty, would it be trespassing too much on your Grace's goodness to beg the sanction of your name, in conjunction with some other nobleman. Give me leave, my lord, to add that it is only a sanction, for no consideration could induce me to desert so glorious a cause, which I wish to see, I believe much more than Government itself decided by the justice of my country.

I am to be carried down in half an hour to Westminster, where if your Grace will favour me with an answer, you will add to the obligations I have already



Emery Walker, photographer

JOHN WILKES

From a drawing by Richard Earlom in the National Portrait Gallery

receiv'd, and if possible, to the infinite respect, with which I have the honour to be,

My lord,

Your Grace's most obedt.,

and most humble servant,

JOHN WILKES.

Tuesday, the fourth day of my imprisonment.

THE DUKE OF GRAFTON TO LORD TEMPLE.

[*"Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton."*]

BOND ST., May 3, 1763.

My dear Lord,

I sit down to open my situation to your lordship with much less apprehension than I should do to most of my friends, since I have seen so many instances of your goodness, I may say partiality to me. A letter from Mr. Wilkes, which I enclose, came to me while I was out a riding this morning: your lordship will see the purport of it and as it is now too late to send him any answer, I flatter myself you will add this to many other obligations and that you will tell him how I stood circumstanced the first time you either see, or write to him. In short, my lord, I went as I think every acquaintance is almost bound to do, to see Mr. Wilkes in his confinement, to hear from himself his own story and his defence; and to show that no influence ought to stop the means of every man's justifying himself from an accusation, even though it should be of the most heinous kind. Hearing the shyness of lawyers in general to undertake his cause, as also the manner (perhaps unwarrantable) of his confinement, I was more desirous than ever to show, that as far as my small power could extend, no subject of this country should want my countenance against oppression. But, my lord, when I look upon myself as called in to bail, tho' it had been for the person in the world who had the most right to have asked that sort of favour from me, I must nevertheless have trod very warily on ground that seemed to come any ways under the

denomination of an insult on the Crown. That, my lord, is, and always has been a rule laid down by me which I will most religiously observe, that nothing in which I engage against His Majesty's ministers, whom I disapprove, shall ever be carried on by me with the shadow of offence against his person or family.

The consistency of my character, will I hope therefore be my excuse to him, I am confident it will be to your lordship, which I most desire. I might add to this, that on talking this point over with my relations, I have given them my opinion and assured them that my meaning was only to go as far as I have represented to your lordship, to whom,

I have the honour to be &c. &c.

GRAFTON.

P.S.—I am authoriz'd to say the same motive induced Lord Villiers to accompany me to see Mr. W.

LORD TEMPLE TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

[*"Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton."*]

PALL MALL, May 3, 1763.

My dear Lord,

Having received from Mr. Wilkes a request similar to that which he had the honour of making to your Grace, I instantly complied with it and as I heard of his intention of applying to you, I was desirous of waiting upon your Grace this morning in order to explain to you the motives which had determined me to lend myself with pleasure to his desire. No man in the kingdom can bear a more dutiful regard than I do to the Crown, or is more full of veneration for His Majesty than myself; at the same time I hope there is not any man in the kingdom more ready to stand forth, as far as in me lies, the zealous protector of the liberty of the subject. Without entering into the question whether Mr. Wilkes be, or be not the author of the last *North Briton* and whether it be libellous or not, I think he has been proceeded against in a manner that ought to give a just alarm to every true friend of this Con-

stitution ; in that light I hold it an honour to be his bail, and so does the Duke of Bolton, who on the same principle has voluntarily offered himself. If your Grace could have seen this matter in the same way, I think an opportunity was offered to you of showing to the world in an amiable light one of the great and amiable qualities which are already so universally recognized in your Grace. Allow me to assure you, no man honours you more than I do, and that I am, with sincere respect,

My dear lord,

Your Grace's most obedt.

and most humble servant,

TEMPLE.

I beg you will excuse this scrawl, from the extreme hurry in which I write.

As it happened, the Lord Chief Justice, having heard the case in a court crowded with the prisoner's supporters, desired two days in which to consider his verdict, sending Wilkes back to the Tower, but under the express direction that he was no longer to be kept a close prisoner there. Judgment was delivered on the 6th, when Wilkes's release was ordered on the ground that seditious libel did not fall within the offences of treason, felony, or breach of the peace, for which alone Members of Parliament could then be deprived of their privilege. It was also held that general warrants—that is to say, a warrant issued by a Secretary of State to seize a person, not named therein, charged with being concerned in a specified case—were illegal, oppressive, and unconstitutional. Wilkes was further avenged later in the year when he won £1,000 damages in the action instituted in his name by Lord Temple against Robert Wood, the Under-Secretary who had seized the prisoner's papers. After six years' delay—due to his approaching outlawry—Wilkes was awarded a further £4,000 in the similar proceedings brought against Halifax for the unlawful seizure of his person.

Meantime, the King was not only mortified that such an insufferable subject as Wilkes should be able to shelter himself behind parliamentary privilege, but was also exasperated

with the Prime Minister who had succeeded Bute. Grenville had probably waited for this new opportunity of power, and so long as he remained in office was determined to be no mere puppet in the hands of Bute, strive as hard as that favourite might to continue to pull the strings from his royal master's closet. Rather than submit indefinitely to Grenville's obstinacy, George III. was now prepared to supplant him by Pitt, especially as by so doing he might succeed in preventing what threatened to be a dangerous combination among the Opposition. On the sudden death of Egremont in August, Bute, therefore, again approached the Great Commoner. Pitt was then sent for by the King himself, and for a time it looked as though His Majesty had come to terms with the one man who might have steered the ship of State through the dangerous waters ahead. But Pitt, though willing to take office, would only do so with an administration which should include those Whig leaders who had lately been so shamefully treated, and exclude all those who had brought about the obnoxious peace. By this he meant in particular that he would have no dealings with Bute, Bedford, Grenville and Halifax. He was prepared, however, to include a number of Bute's supporters in minor positions in the administration. The King appears at first to have been agreeable to all Pitt's demands, and the result of the first visit filled the Whigs with elation.

Various reasons have been given for the subsequent failure of the negotiations. George III. declared it was because, at the second interview, Pitt increased his demands beyond what His Majesty was able to grant.¹ It was more likely that Bute, in the meantime, realising that the alliance with Pitt could only be obtained by admitting a dangerous preponderance of the old Whig party into the Government, persuaded the King that this must be prevented at all costs. Hardwicke sent an interesting account of this futile conference to his son :

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE TO LORD ROYSTON.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

September 4, 1763.

I have heard the whole from the Duke of Newcastle, and on Friday morning *de source* from Mr.

¹ Grenville Papers, Vol. II., p. 201.

Pitt. It is as strange as it is long ; for I believe it is the most extraordinary transaction that ever happened in any court in Europe, even in times as extraordinary as the present. It began, as to the substance, by a message from my Lord Bute to Mr. Pitt at Hayes, through my Lord Mayor, to give him the meeting privately at some third place. This his lordship [Lord Bute] afterwards altered by a note from himself, saying, that as he loved to do things openly, he would come to Mr. Pitt's house in Jermyn Street in broad daylight. They met accordingly, and Lord Bute, after the first compliments, frankly acknowledged that his ministry could not go on, and that the King was convinced of it, and therefore he [Lord B.] desired that Mr. Pitt would open himself frankly and at large, and tell him his ideas of things and persons with the utmost freedom. After much excuse and hanging back, Mr. Pitt did so with the utmost freedom indeed, though with civility. Lord Bute heard with great attention and patience ; entered into no defence ; but at last said, " If these are your opinions, why should you not tell them to the King himself, who will not be unwilling to hear you ? "—" How can I, my Lord, *presume to go to the King, who am not of his council, nor in his service, and have no pretence to ask an audience ?* The presumption would be too great ! " " But, suppose his Majesty should order you to attend him, I presume, Sir, you would not refuse it. " " *The King's command would make it my duty, and I should certainly obey it.* "

This was on last Thursday se'nnight. On the next day [Friday] Mr. Pitt received from the King *an open note unsealed*, requiring him to attend his Majesty on Saturday noon, at the Queen's palace in the Park. In obedience thereto, Mr. Pitt went on Saturday at noon-day through the Mall in his gouty chair, the boot of which (as he said himself) makes it as much known as if his name was writ upon it, to the Queen's palace. He was immediately carried into the closet ; received very graciously ; and his Majesty began in

like manner as his *quondam* favourite had done, by ordering him to tell him his opinion of things and persons at large, and with the utmost freedom ; and I think did in substance make the like confession, that he thought his present ministers could not go on. The audience lasted three hours, and Mr. Pitt went through the whole, upon both heads, more fully than he had done to Lord Bute, but with great complaisance and *douceur* to the King ; and his Majesty gave him a very gracious *accueil*, and heard him with great patience and attention. Mr. Pitt affirms that, in general, and upon the most material points, he appeared by his manner, and many of his expressions, to be convinced. Mr. Pitt went through the infirmities of the peace ; the things necessary, and hitherto neglected, to improve and preserve it ; the present state of the nation, both foreign and domestic ; the great Whig families and persons who had been driven from his Majesty's council and service, which it would be for his interest to restore. In doing this, he repeated many names ; upon his Majesty told him there was pen, ink, and paper, and he wished he would write them down. Mr. Pitt humbly excused himself, saying *that* would be too much for him to take upon him, and he might, upon his memory, omit some material persons ; which might be subject to imputation. The King still said he liked to hear him, and bid him go on ; but said, now and then, that his honour must be consulted ; to which Mr. Pitt answered in a very courtly manner. His Majesty ordered him to come again on Monday ; which he did, to the same place, and in the same public manner.

Here comes in a parenthesis, that on Sunday Mr. Pitt went to Claremont, and acquainted the Duke of Newcastle with the whole ; fully persuaded, from the King's manner and behaviour, that the thing would do ; and that on Monday the outlines of the new arrangement would be settled. This produced the messages to those lords who were sent for. Mr. Pitt undertook to write to the Duke of Devonshire

and the Marquess of Rockingham, and the Duke of Newcastle to myself.

But behold, the catastrophe of Monday. The King received Mr. Pitt equally graciously; and that audience lasted near two hours. The King began, that he had considered of what had been said, and talked still more strongly of his honour. His Majesty then mentioned Lord Northumberland for the Treasury, still proceeding upon the supposition of a change. To this Mr. Pitt hesitated an objection, that certainly Lord Northumberland might be considered, but that he should not have thought of him for the Treasury. His Majesty then mentioned Lord Halifax for the Treasury. Mr. Pitt said, "Suppose your Majesty should think fit to give his lordship the Paymaster's place?" The King replied, "But, Mr. Pitt, I had designed that for poor George Grenville; he is your near relation, and you once loved him." To this the only answer made was a low bow. And now here comes the bait. "Why," says his Majesty, "should not Lord Temple have the Treasury? You could go on then very well!"—"Sir, the person whom you shall think fit to favour with the chief conduct of your affairs cannot possibly go on without a Treasury connected with him; but that alone will do nothing. It cannot be carried on without the great families who have supported the Revolution government, and other great persons of whose abilities and integrity the public have had experience, and who have weight and credit in the nation. I should only deceive your Majesty, if I should leave you in an opinion that I could go on, and your Majesty make a solid administration, on any other foot!"—"Well, Mr. Pitt, I see (or I fear) this won't do. My honour is concerned, and I must support it! *Et sic finita est fabula. Vos valete*; but I cannot, with a safe conscience, add *et plaudite*."

Mr. Pitt professes himself firmly persuaded, that my Lord Bute was sincere at first, and that the King was in earnest the first day; but that on the inter-

mediate day, Sunday, some strong effort was made, which produced the alteration. He likewise affirms, that if he was examined upon oath, he could not tell upon what this negotiation broke off ; whether upon any particular point, or upon the general complexion of the whole. It will certainly be given out, that the reason was the unreasonable extent of Mr. Pitt's plan—a general rout ; and that the minority, after having complained so much of proscription, have endeavoured to proscribe the majority. I asked Mr. Pitt the direct question ; and he assured me, that although he thought himself obliged to name a great many persons for his own exculpation, yet he did not name about five or six for particular places. I must tell you, that one of these was your humble servant, for the President's place.

Whatever the cause of the failure, the fact remains that this golden opportunity of securing Pitt was lost and the makeshift Grenville remained in office, sharing the supremacy with Bedford. The Duke had at length consented to join the Government as President of the Council, but only on condition that Bute should retire from the Court as well as from the Cabinet. Grenville had also insisted upon this, whereupon the King declared that Bute himself had “ desired to retire absolutely from all business whatever, that he would absent himself from the King for a time, ‘ till an administration, firmly established, should leave no room for jealousy against him.’ ”¹ Thus began the Grenville-Bedford Administration, the crowning blunder of which was the breach between the Mother Country and the American Colonies, which, widened by mutual misunderstandings, and the obstinacy of the King, was destined to become irreparable.

Parliament met in November amid much anxiety among the Court Party as to what, in Lord Barrington's words to Sir Andrew Mitchell, might “ still lurk behind the curtain, or whether the sparks of discontented ambition will again burst into a flame.”² It began dramatically enough with the

¹ Grenville Papers, Vol. II., p. 201.

² Ellis's “ Original Letters,” Second Series, Vol. IV.

Wilkes duel on the eve of the debate which led to his outlawry :

LORD BARRINGTON TO SIR ANDREW MITCHELL.

[*Ellis's "Original Letters,"* Second Series, Vol. IV.]

CAVENDISH SQUARE, November 17, 1763.

Dear Sir,

Last Tuesday the Parliament met, and the House of Commons, before the King's Speech was reported from the Chair, took into consideration a message from his Majesty on the subject of Mr. Wilkes, stating the impediments thrown in the way of his trial by the decision of Westminster Hall on the head of privilege. After long debate on various points it was determined that the *North Briton*, No. 45, was an infamous seditious libel, &c. It was also resolved to proceed farther on the message next day, when the point of privilege should be discussed, and inquiry made whether Mr. Wilkes was the author of that paper, with intention, on proof thereof, to expel him ; but just as the House was going to proceed yesterday on this business, news came that he had been shot through the body in a duel, by Sam Martin, late Secretary to the Treasury. Martin had said in a speech the day before (after mentioning some virulent abuse thrown on him in a former *North Briton*) " that whoever was capable in a printed anonymous paper to asperse him by name, was a cowardly scoundrel." Wilkes, the next morning, wrote a letter to Martin acknowledging himself the author of that paper, and they proceeded to Hyde Park, where the duel was fought. The wound is not thought dangerous ; but it occasioned the putting off the consideration of the message, and we went on to the Speech.

The address was moved by Lord Carnarvon and seconded by Lord Frederick Campbell. Mr. Pitt spoke with great ability and the utmost degree of temper. He said he had not altered his opinion of the Peace, which he still thought inadequate to our

situation and successes ; but that being made and approved by Parliament, nothing more unfortunate could happen than that it should be broken. That it was every man's business to contribute all he could to make it lasting, and to improve it ; for which purpose he recommended union and abolition of party distinctions as absolutely necessary. He spoke civilly, and not unfavourably of the Ministers ; but of the King he said everything which duty and affection could inspire. The effect of this was a Vote for the Address, *nemine contra dicente*. . . .

I must return for a moment to Wilkes, that you may know more of Mr. Pitt's present temper, for which I cannot account. He speaks as ill of him and his writings as anybody ; he approved the resolution against his Paper No. 45, except one word ; but he is very warm on the affair of privilege, which he insists to have been rightly determined by the Court of Common Pleas, and violated by the Secretaries of State. He abused the opinion given by the Crown lawyers, and treated both Attorney and Solicitor General very roughly, though the former has resigned, and was supposed to be politically connected with him. I know not what to make of this in all respects most extraordinary man.

Before the end of the year Wilkes was sufficiently recovered to make for the Continent before the House could pass judgment upon him. " It was his only way of defeating both his creditors and his prosecutors," wrote Lord Chesterfield to his son on December 31.¹ The House passed judgment of outlawry upon him for the notorious " No. 45," and the " Essay on Woman," and both the Court and the Ministry congratulated themselves on being well rid of the most dangerous agitator in the kingdom. " He and his cause," wrote Barrington to Mitchell on January 12, 1764, " are already forgotten by the only friends he had, the Mob ; and we shall not soon have any similar writings." ²

¹ " Lord Chesterfield's Letters," Vol. IV., p. 380.

² Ellis's " Original Letters," Second Series, Vol. II., p. 478.

CHAPTER III

THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

Grenville's Stamp Act—America's Resentment—James Otis's Historic Speech—Where Independence was Born—British Imperialism then and now—Antagonism between Colonial Troops and Regulars—Harrington's Prophecy in 1656—The Fear of Ecclesiastical Rule—The Passing of the Act—Pitt's Isolation—The King's First Attack of Insanity—The Regency Act—Fresh Negotiations with Pitt—Their Failure—The Colonists as the Champions of Liberty—A Warning from America—The Silk Weavers' Riots—Grenville, Bedford, and the King—Another Fruitless Appeal to Pitt—Rockingham becomes Prime Minister—How America Received the Stamp Act—Washington's Views—Memorials to the King and Parliament—The Debate on American Affairs—Pitt's Speeches—Repeal of the Stamp Act—Edmund Burke's Maiden Speech—The Declaratory Act—Franklin at the Bar of the House—Pitt's Triumph.

HAVING disposed of Wilkes—temporarily at all events—Grenville proceeded to tackle the larger problem of governing the Empire. England was groaning under what then seemed an overwhelming National Debt of £148,000,000, and, like many another Englishman, Grenville honestly believed that the Colonists had not borne their share of the war which had freed them for ever from the danger of subjugation by the French. It was only reasonable in his view that for the future they should contribute to the cost of their defence and administration, whether they wanted to or not. He saw that the Acts of Trade in the Colonies had practically become a dead letter through evasion and smuggling. The vessels of the Royal Navy on the American coast were accordingly ordered to assist in enforcing them. Standing armies were proposed as a permanent garrison, a third of the cost of which was to be paid by men who were quite prepared, if necessary, to do their soldiering themselves. The revenue was to be derived by a new Act, to be introduced in the following year (1765), by which every written agreement was required to be stamped in order to secure legal validity, duty for which must be paid in England.

In giving notice of this Act, Grenville intimated that he was prepared to consider any equally effective form of taxation that the colonists could meantime suggest as an alternative. Grenville was aware that he was treading on ground where Robert Walpole and Pitt had both feared to tread. Although the Navigation Laws had been imposed upon the colonies with the sole object of benefiting the Mother Land—designed to prevent them from trading with any other country—and the colonies, in times of emergency, were accustomed to grant supplies of their own free will, no attempt had hitherto been made to tax the colonies for revenue purposes. The proposed Stamp Act was a challenge to American

thrown down at a more inopportune time. The colonists were already smarting under the exasperating enforcement of laws which they regarded as arbitrary, and at which they snapped their fingers whenever and wherever possible. The depth of their resentment was sounded by James Otis, on resigning his lucrative post as Advocate General at Boston rather than agree to the Writs of Assistance which gave the customs officers authority to search the house of any one suspected of smuggling. It was then that Otis jumped to the front as a champion of colonial rights, in a memorable speech which lasted longer than that in which Pitt had denounced the Peace in the English House of Commons :

Otis [wrote John Adams who was present on this historic occasion] was a flame of fire. With a promptitude of classical allusions, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance of his eye into futurity, and a torrent of impetuous eloquence, he hurried away everything before him. American independence was then and there born ; the seeds of patriots and heroes were then and there sown, to defend the vigorous youth, the *non sine diis animosus infans*. Every man of a crowded audience appeared to me to go away, as I did, ready to take arms against Writs of Assistance. Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the

arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then and there the child Independence was born.

Some allowance must be made for local enthusiasm when the future President of the United States claims this outburst as the birth of American independence. Neither Otis nor any one else at the meeting dreamt of taking up arms against the Mother Land at that time. The meeting was merely symptomatic of long-continued discontent, and nothing happened as a result of it except that Otis became a popular idol. By his eloquence he had not only denounced the Writs of Assistance and other acts that he condemned as intolerable hardships, but had also furnished the people with the maxim that all taxation without representation was tyranny.

It was at the fall of Quebec in 1759, if anywhere, that the child Independence was born. More than one shrewd prophet had already foretold that the conquest of Canada would be followed by the loss of the North American Colonies. "The English Government," wrote the Swedish naturalist, Peter Kalm, who, in his "Travels in North America," recorded his personal impression of both countries, "has sufficient reason to consider the French in North America as the best means of keeping the colonies in their due submission." It was Kalm's firm conviction that the growing spirit of independence, caused by the handicap of commercial restrictions, and encouraged by the increasing number of Dutch, German and French settlers, was only kept in check by the feeling of insecurity against a hostile neighbour.

British Imperialism as we understand it to-day, with its lofty ideals and deeper significance, was unknown to the second-rate King and statesmen who controlled the destinies of England at the close of the Seven Years' War. No one dreamt of an Empire in which the Mother Country would undertake the entire burden of Imperial defence—save when her growing sons made voluntary contributions—and cheerfully submit to the imposition by the colonies of protective duties on her goods. The essential difference lies in the fact that the Mother Land is now sure of her sons; and the sons have proved up to the hilt their readiness to spring to the

assistance of the Mother Land at the first call to arms. It is true that the American colonists fought side by side with the regulars in the war in North America, but they were fighting for their own provinces as much as, if not more than, for England. Unaided by English troops the colonials took Louisburg—when the supplies of the garrison were cut off by the British Fleet—but the worst of both sides was seen when they were allied with the regulars. The arrogance of the British officer for “mere colonials” in those days was hardly likely to bring out their best qualities. Wolfe did not disguise his contempt for them in a letter written from Louisburg on August 7, 1758 :

The Americans are in general the dirtiest, most contemptible cowardly dogs that you can conceive. There is no depending on them in action. They fall down dead in their own dirt and desert by battalions, officers and all. Such rascals as those are rather an encumbrance than any real strength to an army. . . .¹

This feeling of antagonism was returned with interest by many colonials who gained in that war experience which was to stand them in good stead in the coming struggle. Revolutionary leaders protested to the end that independence was the last thing that any thinking man desired in all North America. John Adams, who wrote of Otis’s famous speech as the birth of the child Independence, protested as late as March, 1775, that to maintain that there were any people in Massachusetts who “hunt after independence is the greatest slander on the province.” Yet when he started his revolutionary articles in the *Boston Gazette* in 1774, under the signature of “Novanglus,” he took the line that colonial independence was justified as a natural law, quoting Harrington’s account of Roman colonisation in support of his argument. Harrington’s “Oceana,” in which appeared the prophecy of American independence, which was written as long ago as 1656, was included by John Adams in the lists of books which had influenced American opinion most in his day.

¹ Beckles Willson’s “Life and Letters of James Wolfe.”

Locke, Milton, Machiavelli, and others helped in the same way to kindle the national enthusiasm for Liberty. They were great readers, were these fathers of the American Revolution, and knew by heart such familiar passages in "Oceana" as: "The colonies in the Indies they are yet babes that cannot live without sucking the breasts of their Mother Cities, but such as I mistake not, if when they come of age they do not wean themselves, which causes me to wonder on Princes that delight to be exhausted in that way"; and: "Provincial or dependent Empire is not to be exercised by them that have the balance of dominion in the province," meaning the landowners, "because they would bring the Government from provincial and dependent into national and independent." Imbued with such ideas as these, which exercised an influence more far-reaching perhaps than is generally recognised, the colonists were in less mood than ever to submit to what they regarded as Imperial aggression now that the French peril had been removed. Their growing pains were not merely political and commercial. Much ill-feeling existed between the Puritans and the Episcopalians, and the fear that events were moving towards a church establishment, and the ecclesiastical rule which had driven so many of the early settlers from home, played no small part in the estrangement.

All this deep-seated resentment was little understood by politicians at home. No notice was taken of the remonstrances sent from the colonies when the proposals for the Stamp Tax were discussed and condemned there, though both Francis Bernard, the Governor of Massachusetts, and Hutchinson, the Lieutenant-Governor, stoutly opposed the plan. "It cannot be good policy to tax the Americans," wrote Hutchinson—afterwards venomously reviled by the colonists as a traitor, though he never changed his opinion on this crucial point; "it will prove prejudicial to the national interests. You will lose more than you will gain." Other protests were received firmly opposing Parliament's assumption of the right to interfere in the colonies' internal affairs; but all to no purpose.

The Stamp Act was introduced by Grenville in the House of Commons on February 6, 1765. Whether it meant loss or

gain, Grenville and the King were determined to settle the question ~~as to the supremacy of the English Parliament in all matters relating to the colonies.~~ Benjamin Franklin, who had been sent by the Assembly of Pennsylvania to resist the attempt of the Mother Government to tax the colonies without representation, described the origin and passage of the Act in a letter which, though written some years later, deserves to be included in this chapter :

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

[*Franklin's Works. Edited by Sparks.*]

PASSY, March 12, 1778.

In the pamphlet you were so kind as to lend me there is one important fact misstated, apparently from the writer's not having been furnished with good information ; it is the transaction between Mr. Grenville and the colonies, wherein he understands that Mr. Grenville demanded of them a specific sum, that they refused to grant anything, and that it was on their refusal only that he made the motion for the Stamp Act. No one of these particulars is true. The fact was this :

Some time in the winter of 1763-4, Mr. Grenville called together the agents of the several colonies, and told them that he proposed to draw a revenue from America, and to that end his intention was to levy a stamp duty on the colonies by Act of Parliament in the ensuing session, of which he thought it fit that they should be immediately acquainted, that they might have time to consider, and, if any other duty equally productive would be more agreeable to them, they might let him know it. The agents were therefore directed to write this to their respective Assemblies, and communicate to him the answers they should receive ; the agents wrote accordingly.

I was a member in the Assembly of Pennsylvania when this notification came to hand. The observations there made upon it were, that the ancient, established, and regular method of drawing aids from the colonies was this. The occasion was always



Emery Walker, photographer

GEORGE GRENVILLE. 1712-1770

From an engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds by T. A. Dean

first considered by their sovereign in his Privy Council, by whose sage advice he directed his Secretary of State to write circular letters to the several Governors, who were directed to lay them before their Assemblies. In those letters the occasion was explained for their satisfaction, with gracious expressions of his Majesty's confidence in their known duty and affection, on which he relied, that they would grant such sums as should be suitable to their abilities, loyalty, and zeal for his service. That the colonies had always granted liberally on such requisitions, and so liberally during the late war that the King, sensible they had granted much more than their proportion, had recommended it to Parliament, five years successively, to make them some compensation, and the Parliament accordingly returned them two hundred thousand pounds a year, to be divided among them. That the proposition of taxing them in Parliament was therefore both cruel and unjust. That, by the constitution of the colonies, their business was with the *King*, in matters of aid ; they had nothing to do with any *financier*, nor he with them ; nor were the agents the proper channels through which requisitions should be made ; it was therefore improper for them to enter into any stipulation, or make any proposition, to Mr. Grenville about laying taxes on their constituents by Parliament, which had really no right at all to tax them, especially as the notice he had sent them did not appear to be by the King's order, and perhaps was without his knowledge ; as the King, when he would obtain anything from them, always accompanied his requisition with good words ; but this gentleman, instead of a decent demand, sent them a menace that they should certainly be taxed, and only left them the choice of the manner. But, all this notwithstanding, they were so far from refusing to grant money, that they resolved to the following purpose ; That, as they always had, so they always should think it their duty to grant aid to the Crown, according to their abilities,

subject of a Regency was brought before Parliament in a speech from the Throne. The King was at first empowered to nominate as Regent "the Queen or any other person of the royal family usually residing in England." The story is well known how, the question having been raised whether the Princess Dowager was to be regarded as a member of the royal family for this purpose, the King was induced to agree to a form of words which definitely excluded her in the Bill as originally brought into the Lords and there passed. The King's conduct in thus consenting to a deliberate affront upon his mother has never been satisfactorily explained. It was no wonder that Walpole wrote :

The astonishment of the world is not to be described. Lord Bute's friends are thunderstruck ; the Duke of Richmond almost danced about the House for joy ; some palliate it by saying it was done at the Princess's desire ; but the most inquisitive say, the King was taken by surprise, and that Lord Halifax did not observe to his Majesty the omission of his mother's name. Be that as it may, open war seems to be declared between the Court and the administration, and men are gazing to see which side will be victorious.¹

Whatever the King's motives or misunderstandings may have been, the triumph of the Grenville Ministry was short-lived. When the Bill was passing through the Commons one of the King's Friends, indirectly inspired by his Majesty, proposed the insertion of the Princess Dowager's name, and only thirty-seven members dared to vote against it. The amendment was carried to the Lords and passed, the Ministers, as Grafton writes, "having the mortification of being obliged to submit to that affront which they had destined for others."² The days of the obnoxious Government were now numbered. "One remedy," wrote Walpole to Lord Hertford, "is obvious, and at which, after such insults and provocations, were I Lord Bute, I should not stick. I would deliver myself up, bound hand and foot, to Mr. Pitt, rather

¹ Walpole's Letters.

² Grafton Memoirs, p. 31.

than not punish such traitors and wretches, who moreover, submit, affront, and swallow in the most ignominious manner.”¹ It was to Mr. Pitt, in point of fact, that George III., and presumably But^e as well, now turned, employing Cumberland as Ambassador for the Crown, in order to bring about, if possible, a Ministry which should include not only Pitt, but also the great Whig families. But for Pitt the King would probably have succeeded ; but a week’s negotiations, in the course of which Newcastle, Rockingham, and their followers had been practically won on condition that Pitt would join them, resulted in a final visit to Hayes which ended in failure. The story of this interview is best told in Cumberland’s own words :

Sunday, May the 12th, Lord Albemarle and I set out for Hayes, between nine and ten in the morning ; and just before we set out I desired Lord Temple might have a note to meet us at eleven. I got to Hayes, and kept Mr. Pitt *tête-à-tête* for an hour and a half, before Lord Temple joined us and Lord Albemarle. I repeated to Mr. Pitt the King’s most sincere desire of seeing affairs both at home and abroad carried on with more spirit and activity than he was able to do with this present Administration. That his Majesty had looked round, and found none so proper to assist him in reinstating affairs as he (Mr. Pitt) ; that, therefore, as great marks as the King could give of his sincere desire for his assistance, he had ordered me personally to go down and bring him to Court, where his Majesty desired he would take an active part. I represented to him the manner in which this Administration used his Majesty, and that no time was to be lost, as the Parliament must be soon up ; that this country looked up to him as a man who had been the author of the great successes during the war ; that they almost universally wished him at the head of public affairs ; the public affairs requiring as much spirit in their present situation as they might have done during the war.

¹ Walpole’s Letters.

He began his answer by desiring that he might be laid at the King's feet ; that he was confounded at the honour which it pleased his Majesty to think of him at all ; but much more so for that distinguished mark of his grace and favour, which he received by my personal visit ; that he was almost rendered an invalid by the gout ; but that he had still vigour and strength of mind to undertake business, if he saw a probability of success ; that, as to foreign affairs (which he began with) he was afraid that his personal ideas were so much disliked at Court ; he would even own, that perhaps nine men in ten in the kingdom were against him in opinion, but that yet it was his opinion, and therefore it rendered him, if not totally improper to enter into his Majesty's Council, at least it would incapacitate him from acting in the intended sphere of Secretary of State, as, in honour, he never could set his hand to what was diametrically opposite to his opinion. That in any other situation, he would give his negative or single voice in Council without any further consequence attending thereon ; that, without foreign affairs were altered, he could see but little hopes that other things, equally necessary, would follow ; and then repeated the *three questions* which have already been mentioned. First, that a counter-alliance be formed to the House of Bourbon ; secondly, that the officers particularly, as well as others, who had been turned out for their *opinions in Parliament*, should be restored ; thirdly, that something must be done to put people's minds at ease with regard to the *illegality* of the warrants.¹

Whether Pitt objected to this indirect method of negotiation, or to the fact that Newcastle had been approached first ; whether he still nursed his grievances against his old colleagues and was persuaded by Temple to decline any coalition with them ; or whether he suspected that Bute was in secret power again, it is now impossible to say ; but, whatever the

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., pp. 201-3.

real reason, he missed another golden opportunity of establishing a firm Government which might have checked the growing despotism of the Crown and the arbitrary pretensions of a corrupt House of Commons over a people whom it was supposed to represent. It was left to the colonists, to whom Liberty had become as the breath of their nostrils, to checkmate these dangerous moves, thus ensuring the victory for free institutions as much for the Mother Land as for her American colonies. Had they failed, they would have completed the triumph of George III. in establishing his personal will as supreme over all, and the constitutional cause would have been ruined.

Warnings were not wanting in England at this time of the danger of tampering with the rights of the colonists as English subjects. Lord Hyde sent Grenville a letter which he had received from a correspondent regarding a clause in the Mutiny Act then in course of framing for America which empowered the military authorities to quarter troops in private homes in the absence of either barracks or public-houses :

DAVID BARCLAY TO LORD HYDE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

HACKNEY, April 11, 1765.

. . . I cannot refrain availing myself of the liberty heretofore indulged me to plead for America. The for that part of the King's dominions, making it lawful to billet soldiers on a march in *private* families is, in the opinion of every well-wisher to America, and every friend to liberty, such an innovation upon the privileges of those who justly claim the natural rights of this country, that it alarms many well-wishers to the present Administration, and is made use of much to their disadvantage by those who are not so ; for if any man will but for a moment place himself a resident in America, no plausibility of argument attempting to prove the necessity, will convince him that *feels* the oppression. At this juncture especially, it cannot fail of impressing the most disagreeable ideas

upon the minds of the Americans ; and as the number professing non-resisting principles are so inconsiderable to the whole, no man can say what may be the consequence of a law which *avowedly* abridges them of the liberty of English subjects, at a time when their ideas lead them to expect a larger portion than we enjoy as a reward for the toils of their forefathers in settling those deserts. As this law will increase the power of the Commander-in-Chief in America, it may not be improper to remark, what everybody seems to agree in, that if America ever throws off its dependence on this country, it will most probably be attempted by some aspiring genius amongst the military.

Grenville was more anxious about his own political affairs at this time than about any of the so-called grievances of presumptuous and outrageous colonists, as he regarded them. With his colleagues he awaited with growing impatience the result of the King's attempt to change the Ministry. The Duke of Bedford at last ventured to remonstrate with his Majesty, justifying his action by the perilous situation produced by the riots of the Spitalfield weavers and the danger of allowing the existing uncertainty to continue. The mob, resenting the failure of the Bill in the Lords to increase the duty on the importation of Italian silks, had vented their wrath particularly on Bedford, who, an ardent Free Trader, had opposed the Bill. Attacked by the crowd while returning from Parliament, he narrowly escaped with his life. Several days later an assault was made on Bedford House by the rioters in force, when they captured the gardens, and were only repelled by the timely arrival of the Horse Guards. The Duke is said to have behaved with admirable courage on both occasions :

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD TO THE DUKE OF
MARLBOROUGH.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

BEDFORD HOUSE, May 19, 1765.

You must doubtless have heard, my dear Lord, of the riots and tumults we have had here ; I hope all

that is now partly subsided, though I am yet obliged to keep garrison here with 100 infantry and 36 cavalry, and it being Sunday night, the concourse of people is still very great, though not at all dangerous, it consisting chiefly of such as mere curiosity has brought here. I should not have troubled you with this account by flying packet, had not a much more national affair intervened. We have long been apprehensive (I mean the King's Ministers) that Lord Bute had for some time past been operating mischief with the King, and Mr. Grenville and I, so long ago as the beginning of last week, took the liberty to mention to the King our suspicions, to which we could obtain no more satisfactory answer but that he would explain himself more fully hereafter. But it having transpired on Thursday night that a negotiation was actually then carrying on, through the channel of the Duke of Cumberland, with Mr. Pitt, Lord Temple, Duke of Newcastle, and most of the Opposition, and Lord Bute, we found it absolutely necessary in the perilous circumstances of the times, when rebellion was actually in the centre of the metropolis, and I, a peer of Parliament, debarred from taking my seat there, and arraigned by a mob for having given my vote there according to my conscience and opinion, to inquire of his Majesty his intentions with regard to our continuance in his service. We could obtain no further explanation than his intentions to change his administration, but without alleging any fault we had committed towards him, or informing when or by whom we were to be replaced. I took the liberty to remind the King upon what conditions proposed by himself, namely, the excluding Lord Bute from his presence, and any participation in public affairs, I was called by him into his service, and how very unfaithfully these conditions had been kept with me. I showed him the immediate necessity of forming an administration of some kind or other, when all rule and authority was trampled on, and his government set at naught ; and

how little proper we, who had lost his confidence by the articles of his favourite, were to reinstate, in the last act of our administration, order and tranquillity in the distempered state things now were. I therefore intreated him, for his own sake, the public's, our own, and his future Ministers, to fix our successors immediately. I assured him that the same harmony which had subsisted between us until the present time did and would continue. Thus I left him, as did all the rest, without being able to get an explicit answer. I leave it, my dear Lord, to your consideration, whether your presence in town is not necessary at the present crisis. I think mine so much so, that I stay in town, though almost a prisoner in my own house, and not able, without the utmost hazard of my life, to have attended the House of Lords the two last days of their meeting.

For the time being the King's position was seriously endangered by Pitt's refusal to take office. Lord Lyttelton declining to step into the breach, his Majesty was forced to ask the Grenville-Bedford Government to resume their functions on their own terms rather than leave the country in its present disturbed condition without an Administration. The terms were humiliating enough to rouse the anger of a less intolerant monarch than the ambitious young King. They included a demand for further assurance that Bute should never meddle in State affairs of any description; that Bute's brother, James Stuart Mackenzie, should be dismissed from the office of Privy Seal of Scotland; that Henry Fox, now Lord Holland, should be removed from his lucrative post as Paymaster-General. Though forced to submit to these and other indignities, the King did so merely to tide over the existing difficulties. His relations with his Prime Minister may be judged by the following peremptory note which he wrote while Grenville and his colleagues were discussing at Bedford House the terms upon which they would consent to continue in office :

GEORGE III. TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

Tuesday, May 21, 1765, 15 min. past 9 p.m.

Mr. Grenville,

I am surprised that you are not yet come, when you know it was my orders to be attended this evening. I expect you therefore to come the moment you receive this.

Not prepared to be browbeaten by Ministers who were more intent upon employing their powers of personal revenge than upon providing the nation with a stable Government, George III. continued to mark his resentment against them on every possible occasion. The Duke of Bedford retaliated on June 12 in the memorable interview which has been variously reported. Walpole, in his "Memoirs of George III.," declares that a remonstrance was presented to the King on this occasion by Bedford, Sandwich, Grenville and Halifax, and that it took an hour to read. "When they were gone the King said if he had not broken out in a most profuse sweat he would have been suffocated with indignation." Grenville's diary gives a very different version :

The Duke of Bedford went into the closet to ask leave to go out of town, and took that opportunity to remonstrate to the King upon the little countenance he showed to his Ministry, and how difficult it was for them to go on under such difficulties ; that, for his own part, he knew that his Majesty was surrounded by his (the Duke of Bedford's) enemies, among whom he chiefly named Lord Bute, and said he feared that the pernicious advice given to his Majesty would soon or late throw the kingdom into great disorder ; that those who gave it ought to consider that, as well as the consequences it might produce. The King heard him civilly and temperately, and said nothing towards disculpating himself from the want of confidence in and countenance to his Ministry, but absolutely denied Lord Bute's having ever made any representation to him against the

Duke of Bedford, but, on the contrary, that he had always spoken of him with great regard.¹

Bedford's own account is as follows :

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD TO THE DUKE OF
MARLBOROUGH.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

STREATHAM, June 13, 1765.

I promised you, my dear Lord, to let you know if anything material should occur before I left this place to go to Woburn ; and I thought it probable something would, as I was determined to have an explanation with the King before my absenting myself from Court for so long a term as a month, as I hope not to be obliged to come to this part of the world before the 15th of July. I accordingly went into the closet yesterday, and, after some prefatory discourse, and receiving his orders about business now depending in counsel, I took the liberty to desire leave to recapitulate to him what had passed between him and his Ministers from the time he avowed the design of changing his administration to their being called back again by him to resume their functions. Whether his countenance and support had not been promised them ? Whether this promise had been kept ? but, on the contrary, whether all those who are our most bitter enemies had not been countenanced by him in public ? and whether we and our friends had not met with a treatment directly opposite to this ? Whether he is not in his retirement beset with our avowed enemies ? Whether the Earl of Bute's representing the Ministers in a bad light to him, either by himself or his emissaries, is not an interfering (at least indirectly) in public counsels ? Does not this favourite, by interfering in this manner, and not daring to take a responsible employment, act with the utmost hazard to himself ? and, which is of more consequence, risk the King's quiet and the safety of the public ? What must be

¹ Grenville Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 194.

the opinion of the public here, and of Europe in general? Having received no satisfactory answer to any of these questions, nor indeed any other but that Lord Bute was not at all consulted, and that he had never done me any ill offices with his Majesty, I proceeded to beseech him to permit his authority and his favour and countenance to go together; and if the last can't be given to his present Ministers, to transfer to others that authority, which must be useless in their hands, unless strengthened by the former. I assured him that we thought ourselves unfortunate in having lost his good opinion, but that we were conscious of our own good intentions, and that his Majesty is misled by misrepresentations. This is the whole that passed, which is indeed by no means satisfactory to me.

The King took Bedford at his word in a way which the Duke little anticipated. Being unable to confide in his Ministers, he took fresh steps to supersede them, again making an effort to bring Pitt into his service. On this occasion he was careful to approach Pitt first, and for a time it again looked as though he must succeed. Two interviews with the King himself had settled practically everything to their mutual satisfaction, when Pitt's brother-in-law brought all their negotiations to nought by declining the office of First Lord of the Treasury. Pitt had relied upon Temple to fill this post. His health, he pleaded, would prevent him from regular attendance upon his Majesty; and Temple was the only man whom he would trust to act for him in his absence. Since neither argument nor persuasion would induce Temple to change his mind, though he fully realised how much depended upon his decision, the whole negotiations collapsed like a house of cards:

THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND TO THE EARL OF
ALBEMARLE.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

WINDSOR GREAT LODGE, June 26, 1765.

I fear, by what I understood last night from his Majesty, that we are all afloat again, Lord Temple

having most peremptorily and determinately refused bearing a part in any shape, great or small, in the Administration to be formed. This declaration of Lord Temple's prevents Pitt from taking a share, which indeed most thoroughly and most heartily he had done. He, Pitt, is to be this morning with the King again, with whom he intended to part with the utmost respect and thankfulness, declaring with what great satisfaction he would have undertaken affairs, if my Lord Temple would have come in with him. He is also to declare that he would not have displaced either the Earl of Huntingdon [Groom of the Stole], Lord Pomfret [a Lord of the Bedchamber], Lord Denbigh [Master of the Harriers], Lord Litchfield [a Lord of the Bedchamber], Lord Despenser or Mr. Elliott [Treasurer of the Chambers], or Mr. Oswald [Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland]. Moreover, Mr. Mackenzie to be restored to the *sine-cure* of Privy Seal of Scotland, though not to power.¹

These circumstances, so different from what I hoped and really thought were in a manner settled, must, I suppose, bring me to town again. In the mean time, either before you leave London, or else, if you don't propose coming from thence to-day, I should beg a line from you by the return of the messenger, after you have seen the Marquis and the Duke of Grafton, informing them with the purport of this letter, and observing to them, that I found the King already intrenching himself with Pitt's promises of mercy in so many particulars. By what I can pick up, Pitt is completely mortified, and I am heartily sorry for it, as he had entered more sincerely and cordially into the King's service, nay, and went farther almost than the King's views.

I am your very affectionate friend,

WILLIAM.

The real reason for Temple's refusal has never been disclosed. It is known that he highly disapproved of Pitt's

¹ All the persons here named were either Tories or "King's Friends."

tolerant attitude towards certain of Bute's followers, and he may have been piqued by the small share which he had been permitted to take in the negotiations themselves, but his own tantalising explanation was that his reasons were of too personal and private a nature to divulge. Whatever it was, the secret was extraordinarily well kept, and remains hidden to the present day. The failure of Pitt left the King stranded. It was unthinkable again to appeal to Grenville. The only hope for the King remained in a temporary arrangement with the Ministers whom he had humiliated and expelled during the supremacy of Bute.

It was a half-hearted triumph for the Whigs, however, when they returned to power without Pitt, and with the certain knowledge that they had arrayed against them in the Commons a majority which would only support the Government while it remained in favour with the King. The worn-out Duke of Newcastle was content with the office of Lord Privy Seal, leaving the young Marquess of Rockingham to become Prime Minister as First Lord of the Treasury—a popular sportsman and a charming personality, but a statesman of little experience and mediocre ability. General Conway, more resolute as a soldier than as a politician, took the management of the House of Commons as one of the Secretaries of State, the other Secretary being the Pittite Duke of Grafton, who, thanks to Junius, is likely to be remembered for his immoralities long after his public career is forgotten. Charles Townshend declined to leave the profitable post of Paymaster-General—to which he had succeeded on the dismissal of Lord Holland—for the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, which accordingly fell into the competent hands of William Dowdeswell :

LORD CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON.

[*" Lord Chesterfield's Letters."*]

July 15, 1765.

. . . Many more changes are talked of, but so idly and variously that I give credit to none of them. There has been pretty clean sweeping already ; and I do not remember, in my time, to have seen so much at once, as an entire new Board of Treasury, and

two new Secretaries of State, *cum multis aliis*, &c. Here is a new political arch built, but of materials of so different a nature, and without a key-stone, that it does not, in my opinion, indicate either strength or duration. It will certainly require repairs, and a key-stone next winter ; and that key-stone will and must necessarily be Mr. Pitt. It is true, he might have been that key-stone now, and would have accepted, but not without Lord Temple's consent ; and Lord Temple positively refused. There was evidently some trick in this ; but what, is past my conjecturing. *Davus sum non Œdipus*.

According to the same authority, Townshend called the Government "a lute-string Ministry, fit only for the summer." It lasted rather longer than the summer, but it never possessed the power of inspiring confidence either in itself or with the public, and was totally inadequate to the needs of the nation at a time when the murmurings of the approaching storm in America grew more insistent every month. When the news reached America that the Stamp Act had received the royal assent a wave of indignation swept over the colonies from end to end. In New York the Act was reprinted with the death's-head affixed instead of the Royal Arms, and sold in the streets under the title of "England's Folly and America's Ruin." At Philadelphia the guns were spiked. At Boston flags were hoisted at half-mast and the church bells muffled to toll a funeral knell.

In the Assembly of Virginia the young lawyer, Patrick Henry, made his famous speech, in which, after declaiming against the injustice of the measure, he exclaimed, "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Oliver Cromwell, and George the Third——" upon which the Speaker called him to order with cries of "Treason ! Treason !" ; then, pausing a moment, he concluded—"may profit by their experience ! If this be treason, make the most of it." This preliminary storm reached its height in Boston, the hot-bed of the Revolution, during August, when Lord Bute was strung up in effigy from the Liberty Tree by the side of Andrew Oliver, Hutchinson's brother-in-law, who had been appointed prospective

distributor of stamps. In its insensate fury the mob attacked and wrecked the house of the Lieutenant-Governor, Hutchinson himself, who had been among the first to condemn the Tax, and scattered his papers to the winds, including the precious books and manuscripts which he had collected as material for his history of New England. Hutchinson and his family themselves fled for their lives. A town meeting the next day condemned the riots, but the news of these and other excesses elsewhere, if they opened the eyes of many Englishmen to the depth of American feeling on the subject, helped also to harden the hearts of the King and his Friends.

The excitement brings on the scene the significant figure of the young Virginian colonel, George Washington, who, having learnt his lesson in military science during the Seven Years' War, was now living the country life of the period depicted by Thackeray in "The Virginians." Washington represented his county in the House of Burgesses, and kept open house with his devoted wife, formerly the widow Custis, possibly the only cloud on his domestic horizon being that seven years had passed without a child being born to them. The widow Custis had brought him three children by her first marriage; and they were to suffice. "Providence," to repeat an oft-quoted epigram, "denied Washington children that he might be 'father of the whole country.'" It was to one of his wife's uncles in London that Washington now wrote on the subject of the Stamp Act:

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO FRANCIS DANDRIDGE.

[*"Washington's Writings."*]

MOUNT VERNON, September 20, 1765.

. . . The Stamp Act, imposed on the colonies by the Parliament of Great Britain, engrosses the conversation of the speculative part of the colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of taxation as a direful attack upon their liberties, and loudly exclaim against the violation. What may be the result of this, and of some other (I think I may add) ill-judged measures, I will not undertake to determine; but this I may venture to affirm, that

the advantage accruing to the mother country will fall greatly short of the expectations of the ministry ; for certain it is, that our whole substance does already in a manner flow to Great Britain, and that whatsoever contributes to lessen our importations must be hurtful to their manufacturers. And the eyes of our people, already beginning to open, will perceive, that many luxuries, which we lavish our substance in Great Britain for, can well be dispensed with, whilst the necessities of life are mostly to be had within ourselves. This, consequently, will introduce frugality, and be a necessary stimulation to industry. If Great Britain, therefore, loads her manufactories with heavy taxes, will it not facilitate these measures ? They will not compel us, I think, to give our money for their exports, whether we will or not ; and certain I am none of their traders will part with them without a valuable consideration. Where, then, is the utility of these restrictions ?

As to the Stamp Act, taken in a single view, one and the first bad consequence attending it, I take to be this, our courts of judicature must inevitably be shut up ; for it is impossible, or next of kin to it, under our present circumstances, that the Act of Parliament can be complied with, were we ever so willing to enforce the execution ; for, not to say (which alone would be sufficient) that we have not money to pay the stamps, there are many other cogent reasons to prevent it ; and if a stop be put to our judicial proceedings, I fancy the merchants of Great Britain, trading to the colonies, will not be among the last to wish for a repeal of the Act.

I live upon Potomack River in Fairfax county, about ten miles below Alexandria, and many miles distant from any of my wife's relations, who all reside upon York River, and whom we seldom see more than once a year, and not always so often. My wife, who is very well, and Master and Miss Custis, children of her former marriage, all join in making a tender of their duty and best respects to



GEORGE WASHINGTON
AS COLONEL OF THE 22ND VIRGINIA MILITIA, 1775

From the painting by C. W. Peale

yourself and your lady. My compliments to your lady, I beg may also be made acceptable, and that you will do me the justice to believe that I am, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Everywhere the Act was resisted when it came into operation on November 1, 1765. It was more than a man's life was worth in some parts to retain his office as stamp distributor. More far-reaching in its influence than any of these scattered outbursts was the binding effect of the common danger. Hitherto the various colonies had acted as separate units, with the petty jealousies of independent neighbours, and never together as component parts of one united nation. Now for the first time they realised the strength of unity, and at a meeting in Congress nine out of the thirteen colonies presented a united front against the obnoxious Tax, demanding the right of self-taxation, and sending memorials to that effect both to the King and Parliament. It was the news of some of these proceedings which led to the following letter :

GEORGE III. TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

December 5, 1765.

Lieut.-General Conway,

The enclosed is the memorial from Mr. Pitt. It is the copy of the one delivered by me to Lord Halifax, but I received this a day or two before that one. I am more and more grieved at the accounts of America. Where this spirit will end is not to be said. It is, undoubtedly, the most serious matter that ever came before Parliament ; it requires more deliberation, candour, and temper than I fear it will meet with.

Twelve days later the King, in opening the Session in person, explained in his Speech from the Throne that he had called the two Houses together sooner than usual owing to "important occurrences" which had lately taken place in some of his American colonies. The mildness of this official reference to the disturbances in the colonies roused the

wrath of Grenville, whose parting advice to the King on winding up his administration had been "not to suffer any one to advise him to draw the line between his British and American dominions—the richest jewel in his Crown . . . that if any man ventured to defeat the regulations laid down for the colonies, by a slackness in the execution, he should look upon him as a criminal and the betrayer of his country."¹ Seeing that his colonial policy would be called in question, Grenville now proposed as an amendment to the address "to express the indignation of the House at the 'outrageous tumults' in North America." An account of the debate was at once sent to Pitt by one of his followers in the House :

GEORGE COOKE TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

Tuesday evening, 7 o'clock.

Dear Sir,

I am just returned from the House, where there has been a long and unexpected debate on the words of the address, including a good deal of abuse on those who advised his Majesty to speak of what has happened in America, in the gentle terms of *important occurrences*. Lord George Cavendish moved the address, and Lord Palmerston seconded. Mr. George Grenville then rose, and, after assuring the House how much he disliked any steps to a debate when gentlemen were absent and could not answer for themselves, entered directly into the argument : first, he would have substituted *rebellion* instead of *occurrences*, and afterwards declining that, would leave out *both words*, and then proposed an amendment to the address longer than himself, which carried marks of resentment, rather than candour.² He spoke *en prince*, and told us he

¹ Grenville Correspondence, Vol. III., pp. 215-6.

² The following are the terms of Grenville's amendment : "To express our just resentment and indignation at the outrageous tumults and insurrections which have been excited and carried on in North America, and at the resistance given, by open and rebellious force, to the execution of the laws in that part of his Majesty's dominions," etc.

should ask, and hope to have an answer, why the Parliament was not called sooner together? why his Majesty was advised to speak with so much lenity of America? with many other whys. Differing in many things from him, I took the liberty to answer him, in justification of the colonies, and on the cruelty of fixing the name of rebellion on all, because a tumultuous set of people had been riotous.

Mr. Charles Townshend asserted, with vehemence, his approbation of the Stamp Act, and was for enforcing it: he leant much to Mr. George Grenville's opinion, soothed him, and sat down,—determined to vote *against* his amendment!¹ Mr. Elliot the same; thereby insuring a double protection. . . . Sir Fletcher Norton dwelt much on the legislative authority to tax all the world under our dominion, yet ended with intreating Mr. George Grenville to withdraw his amendment. Beckford rubbed up the late administration, and told them how completely his prophecy was accomplished about America. Lord George Sackville supported the address, but inclined to support the Stamp Act. Mr. Nicholson Calvert, Colonel Onslow, Mr. Dyson, Mr. Huske, and one or two more, spoke in the debate; which ended with Mr. George Grenville withdrawing his amendment, and the address passed *nem. con.*

Permit your faithful friend to add his most hearty wish for your appearance at this time. It is the desire and opinion of every independent man; it is the disposition of the Prince and the people. The good of your country calls; *it* always has animated you. I know it ever will. The nation has a claim to your abilities, and your integrity will always give a sanction to the exertion of those abilities—

¹ In reference to the vacillation of Charles Townshend's principles, Lord Chesterfield, in a letter, written at this time to his son, says: "As to Charles, there was a good ridiculous paragraph in the newspapers, two or three days ago: 'We hear, that the right honourable Charles Townshend is indisposed, at his house in Oxfordshire, of a pain in his side; but it is not said in which side.'"

" tandem venias !
 Nec sinas *Juntos* equitare inultos,
 Te duce, Cæsar."

My pen has run further than my intentions. I beg your excuse. . . .

Lord Chesterfield wrote some of his shrewdest letters to his son on the subject of the American crisis at this period, taking the opposite view to his great Tory antagonist, Dr. Johnson, who, as Boswell sadly records—for Boswell was heart and soul for the colonists—regarded them as a "race of convicts, sir, and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging." This, it should be added, was in 1769, after Townshend's new taxes and the Mutiny Act had roused the colonists to further resistance, but before Johnson's prejudiced pamphlet on "Taxation no Tyranny." Chesterfield's reflections on the situation at the end of 1765 are recorded in the ensuing letter :

LORD CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON.

[" *Lord Chesterfield's Letters.* ']

December 27, 1765.

You have, to be sure, had from the office an account of what the Parliament did, or rather did not do, the day of their meeting ; and the same point will be the great object at their next meeting : I mean, the affair of our American Colonies, relatively to the late imposed Stamp Duty ; which our colonists absolutely refuse to pay. The Administration are for some indulgence and forbearance to those froward children of their Mother Country : the Opposition are for taking vigorous, as they call them, but I call them violent, measures ; not less than *les dragonades*, and to have the tax collected by the troops we have there. For my part, I never saw a froward child mended by whipping ; and I would not have the Mother Country become a step-mother. Our trade to America brings in, *communibus annis*, two millions a year ; and the Stamp Duty is estimated at but one hundred thousand pounds a year ; which I would

by no means bring into the stock of the Exchequer, at the loss, or even the risk, of a million a year to the national stock. . . .

Lord Shelburne, who had refused to join the Rockingham Ministry without Pitt, realised how sorely the assistance of that statesman was now needed, as he stated clearly enough in sending him the following account of the debate on the Stamp Act in the House of Lords :

THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HILL STREET,

Saturday night, December 21, 1765.

Dear Sir,

. . . The minutes of the House of Lords, which I have the honour to enclose to you, will inform you of the ground of what has passed in public. My notion of the state of the House of Lords was this : the Opposition, consisting of the late ministers, showed a great deal of factious ability ; which, as it was not much pulled to pieces by any one, appeared to me to pass for real. The administration seemed to have formed a resolution to avoid debate on that day, and therefore interfered but little. The Duke of Grafton and Lord Dartmouth were, I think, the only two who spoke at all. Lord Temple expressed, in the strongest terms, his affection and his esteem for you ; stating your connexion as the honour of his life, and to retain it his object ; and voted with the minority, on the principle of strongly asserting the rights of the English Parliament over America, without committing himself further.

I should not trouble you with any account of myself, if my conduct had not been since, more the subject of observation than I had reason to apprehend ; though I cannot say it has been in general interpreted differently from what I meant to convey. I certainly was desirous to act with firmness, and without regard to little views, upon those principles

which made part of the conversation you honoured me with at Bath. There were other motives, likewise, which incited me very strongly to the part I took. I felt attaching the name of *rebellion* hastily, and *traitors*, to the Americans, and comparing them to the Scots at Derby—which was the language used—dangerous, and perhaps both imprudent and unjust. I could not help deprecating, as strongly as I could, a motion which seemed to preclude a repeal, before it was considered thoroughly how far it might be necessary; and, without committing myself on what might be fit to be done, I endeavoured to distinguish the real ties by which America might be supposed to hold to this country, in order to obviate objections arising from a thousand false lights thrown out on the subject; acknowledging the power of Parliament to be supreme, but preferring the expediency of the act to be considered in a commercial view, regard being to be had to the abilities of the Americans to pay this tax, and likewise to the consequences likely to proceed, in any event, from the late violences. The prejudice against the Americans on the whole seemed very great, and no very decided opinion in favour of the ministry; yet, such is the power of even a changeable Court influence, that the administration divided eighty to twenty-four. . . .

I had no idea that my conduct in the House of Lords could be remembered beyond the day; but the next day, Lord Rockingham sent Sir Jeffrey Amherst to Colonel Barré, and yesterday sent Mr. Dunning to Colonel Barré and to me, with a great many flattering expressions, in regard to Tuesday; and in short, what I am almost ashamed to relate, that if I chose to make a part of the present system, he thought he could answer any opening would be made that I could wish, and that Colonel Barré should have rank in the army, or any thing else added to the Vice-Treasurership, which had been offered him some time since. My answer was very short, and very frank; that, independent of my connexion,

I was convinced, from my opinion of the state of *the Court*, as well as the state of affairs everywhere, no system could be formed, durable and respectable, if Mr. Pitt could not be prevailed on to direct and head it.

This produced a certain degree of communication on that head, in which Lord Rockingham expressed himself certain of Mr. Pitt's good wishes, and that they were most ready to be disposed of as he pleased ; mixed, however, with very great apprehensions, in consequence of second-hand accounts and anecdotes, which I do not think worth troubling Mr. Pitt with, and a great embarrassment as to the manner of application. I did not think it fit to suggest any thing, or to enter further into the matter. They persisted, however, in their application to Colonel Barré ; who returned a still more explicit answer, to the same purpose. You will not think I have much merit in this conduct, when I add, that I am astonished at their infatuation in being persuaded, as they appear to be, of the confidence of the Court ; notwithstanding a very particular conduct in Lord Bute, and a party constantly pervading it, of Lord Egmont, Lord Chancellor, Charles Townshend, Lord George Sackville, Sir Fletcher Norton, &c., ready at a moment's warning to embrace any system.

'Tis you, Sir, alone, in everybody's opinion, can put an end to this anarchy, if any thing can. I am satisfied your own judgment will best point out the time when you can do it with most effect. You will excuse me, I am sure, when I hazard my thoughts to you, as it depends greatly upon you, whether they become opinions ; but, by all I find from some authentic letters from America, nothing can be more serious than its present state, and though it is my private opinion, it would be well for this country to be back where it was a year ago, I even despair of a repeal effecting that ; if it is not accompanied with some circumstances of a firm conduct, and some system immediately following such a concession. . . .

The Cabinet itself hoped in vain that Pitt would go to its rescue, and endow it with the glamour of his great name, as well as with the confidence of the people, who still regarded their old leader as the one statesman worth following. That "Somersetshire Hermit," as he was now pleased to call himself, had bided his time, preferring to watch the world of pigmies he had left behind floundering in difficulties, while he nursed his gout in cynical retirement :

The great of this world [he had written to his wife from Bath a month previously] seem not to have forgotten the Somersetshire hermit, if the mighty names of Newcastle, Norfolk, Bedford, Rockingham, &c., are flattering to the pride of man. I was interrupted here by a kind visit from Mr. Collibee, the mayor ; a less sounding name, but an honest and steady friend. How I shall sustain these honours, I know not ; but while I am relating them to my love, the spirits flow, and the hand obeys. I must however check my own career, and despatch the servant before another interruption. Heaven bless and protect the noble mother and the promising little flock ! For this time, adieu, and think with some comfortable hope of the health of your ever loving husband.¹

The man who, according to Wilkes, was the best orator and the worst letter-writer of his day, was now tempted from his retreat by the American crisis, and the urgent appeals of his friends in both Houses. In the circumstances he might even have overcome his distaste for party politics, and joined the Ministry, had Rockingham approached him in the right spirit, and at the right time. The Cabinet needed him more

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., pp. 332-3. In her reply to this letter, written on the same evening, from Burton Pynsent, Lady Chatham says : " Nine o'clock come, the duties of our Sunday evening done, and the little ones retired to bed, I musing by the fire, comes in my dearest love's letter. What a charm did it immediately spread over my whole mind, and with what delight and gratitude to the Almighty did I read that my prayers had been answered ! The honours paid to the dear Hermit are natural. Superstition leads a few, and true devotion the other part."

than ever since the sudden death at the end of October of the Duke of Cumberland, who had been a tower of strength to the Whigs since he had been restored to favour at Court. Newcastle, with rare magnanimity, was ready to retire altogether from the Cabinet if he were the only stumbling-block in the way of Pitt's alliance, but Rockingham delayed approaching the great man until the end of the year, when the Cabinet was divided on the question to be decided in Parliament in January whether the Stamp Act should be repealed or merely modified. When Thomas Townshend was at length sent to negotiate with him at Bath, Pitt declined to join except on terms which Rockingham naturally refused to accept, namely, that Rockingham should offer his own post at the Treasury to Temple, besides getting rid of Newcastle. The Duke of Grafton then proposed that the King should intervene, and personally confer with Pitt on the subject, but George III. declined to approach the popular idol at the bidding of any one else. He was only ready to risk another offer to Pitt when he saw good occasion for it from his own point of view, but up to the present the new Ministry had not altogether displeased him. He may not, in his heart of hearts, have favoured the repeal of the Stamp Act, but that Act was one of Grenville's measures, and Grenville's recent treatment of him had been so intolerable that the King was ready to humiliate him by every means in his power. Besides, he had no intention of encouraging the idea of an all-powerful Whig administration. "The King," as Lord Hardwicke wrote to his brother, "is extremely unwilling to let in the Trojan Horse":¹

GEORGE III. TO THE MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

January 9, 1766.

Lord Rockingham,

. . . I have revolved, most coolly and attentively, the business now before me, and am of opinion, that so loose a conversation as that of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Townshend is not sufficient to risk either my dignity or the continuance of my adminis-

¹ *Rockingham Memoirs*, Vol. I., p. 267.

tration, by a fresh treaty with that gentleman ; for if it should miscarry, all public opinion of this ministry would be destroyed by such an attempt. I shall therefore, undoubtedly, to-morrow, decline authorizing the Duke of Grafton to say anything to Mr. Pitt, and don't doubt that, when I set the example of steadiness, most of you will see the propriety of that conduct, and will follow it also. I wish, therefore, you would be at St. James's by one to-morrow, that I may talk this affair over with you, previous to my seeing the two Secretaries of State. The Duke of Newcastle's conduct this day was very handsome and dignified.

GEORGE R.

Parliament reassembled five days later, and in the debate on the address Pitt settled all doubt regarding his attitude by standing forth whole-heartedly as the champion of the colonists, and the independent critic of both sides of the House. His utterances, whether his views were right or wrong, were the only speeches worthy of the occasion. Even in the extracts which follow it is not difficult to appreciate the orator's splendid gifts, and commanding power in a House which could make no attempt to set up a worthy rival to the " Somersetshire Hermit " :

I speak not with respect to parties ; I stand up in this place single and unconnected. As to the late ministry [turning himself to Mr. Grenville, who sat within one of him], every capital measure they have taken has been entirely wrong. As to the present gentlemen, to those at least whom I have in my eye [looking at the bench where General Conway sat with the Lords of the Treasury], I have no objection ; I have never been made a sacrifice by any of them. Their characters are fair ; and I am always glad, when men of fair character engage in his Majesty's service. Some of them have done me the honour to ask my opinion before they would engage. These will do me the justice to own, I advised them to engage ; but notwithstanding—I love to be explicit—

I cannot give them my confidence : pardon me, gentlemen [bowing to the ministry], confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom ; youth is the season of credulity ; by comparing events with each other, reasoning from effects to causes, methinks I plainly discover the traces of an over-ruling influence. . . . It is a long time, Mr. Speaker, since I have attended in Parliament. When the resolution was taken in this House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed, so great was the agitation of my mind for the consequences, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it. It is now an Act that has passed. I would speak with decency of every Act of this House ; but I must beg the indulgence of the House to speak of it with freedom. I hope a day may be soon appointed to consider the state of the nation, with respect to America. I hope gentlemen will come to this debate with all the temper and impartiality that his Majesty recommends, and the importance of the subject requires,—a subject of greater importance than ever engaged the attention of this House ; that subject only excepted, when, nearly a century ago, it was the question, whether you yourselves were to be bound or free ? In the meantime, as I cannot depend upon my health for any future day, such is the nature of my infirmities, I will beg to say a few words at present, leaving the justice, the equity, the policy, the expediency of the act to another time. I will only speak to one point, a point which seems not to have been generally understood ; I mean to the right. Some gentlemen [alluding to Mr. Nugent, afterwards Lord Clare, who had insisted that the honour and dignity of the kingdom obliged the Government to compel the enforcement of the Stamp Act, unless the colonists acknowledged the right, and solicited the repeal as a favour] seem to have considered it as a point of honour. If gentlemen consider it in that

light, they leave all measures of right and wrong, to follow a delusion that may lead to destruction. It is my opinion, that this kingdom has no right to lay a tax upon the colonies. At the same time, I assert the authority of this kingdom over the colonies to be sovereign and supreme, in every circumstance of government and legislation whatsoever. They are the subjects of this kingdom, equally entitled with yourselves to all the natural rights of mankind, and the peculiar privileges of Englishmen : equally bound by its laws, and equally participating of the constitution of this free country.

The Americans are the sons, not the bastards of England. Taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power. The taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the Commons alone. . . . There is an idea in some, that the colonies are virtually represented in this House. I would fain know by whom an American is represented here ? Is he represented by any knight of the shire, in any county in this kingdom ? Would to God that respectable representation was augmented to a greater number ! Or will you tell him that he is represented by any representative of a borough—a borough which, perhaps, its own representatives never saw ? This is what is called “the rotten part of the constitution.” It cannot continue a century : if it does not drop, it must be amputated. The idea of a virtual representation of America in this House, is the most contemptible idea that ever entered into the head of man : it does not deserve a serious refutation.

The Commons of America, represented in their several assemblies, have ever been in possession of the exercise of this, their constitutional right, of giving and granting their own money. They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it. At the same time, this kingdom, as the supreme governing and legislative power, has always bound the colonies by her laws, by her regulations and restrictions in trade, in navigation, in manufactures—in every thing,

except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent. Here I would draw the line

*"sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum."*

Grenville replied with a speech in defence of his Act. "Protection and obedience," he argued vehemently, "are reciprocal; Great Britain protects America; America is therefore bound to yield obedience. The seditious spirit of the colonies," he added, with a meaning glance at Pitt, "owes its birth to the factions in this House." This brought Pitt again to his feet:

I have been charged with giving birth to sedition in America. They have spoken their sentiments with freedom against this unhappy act, and that freedom has become their crime. Sorry I am to hear the liberty of speech in this House imputed as a crime. But the imputation shall not discourage me. It is a liberty I mean to exercise. No gentleman ought to be afraid to exercise it. It is a liberty by which the gentleman who calumniates it might have profited. He ought to have desisted from his project. The gentleman tells us, America is obstinate; America is almost in open rebellion. I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would have been fit instruments to make slaves of the rest. . . . No minister since the accession of King William thought or even dreamed of robbing the colonies of their constitutional right until the era of the late administration. Not that there were wanting some, when I had the honour to serve his Majesty, to propose to me to burn my fingers with an American Stamp Act. With the enemy at their back, with our bayonets at their breasts, in the day of their distress, perhaps the Americans would have submitted to the imposition; but it would have been taking an ungenerous and unjust advantage.

The gentleman boasts of his bounties to America. Are not those bounties intended finally for the benefit of this kingdom? If they are not, he has misapplied the national treasures. I am no courtier of America; I stand up for this kingdom. I maintain, that the Parliament has a right to bind, to restrain America. Our legislative power over the colonies is sovereign and supreme. When it ceases to be sovereign and supreme, I would advise every gentleman to sell his lands, if he can, and embark for that country. When two countries are connected together, like England and her colonies, without being incorporated, the one must necessarily govern; the greater must rule the less; but so rule it, as not to contradict the fundamental principles that are common to both. If the gentleman does not understand the difference between external and internal taxes, I cannot help it; but there is a plain distinction between taxes levied for the purpose of raising a revenue, and duties imposed for the regulation of trade, for the accommodation of the subject; although, in the consequences, some revenue might incidentally arise from the latter.

The gentleman asks, when were the colonies emancipated? But I desire to know, when they were made slaves. But I dwell not upon words. When I had the honour of serving his Majesty, I availed myself of the means of information which I derived from my office: I speak, therefore, from knowledge. My materials were good; I was at pains to collect, to digest, to consider them; and I will be bold to affirm, that the profit to Great Britain from the trade of the colonies, through all its branches, is two millions a year. This is the fund that carried you triumphantly through the last war. The estates that were rented at two thousand pounds a year, threescore years ago, are at three thousand pounds at present. Those estates sold then from fifteen to eighteen years' purchase; the same may now be sold for thirty. You owe this to America: this is

the price America pays for her protection. And shall a miserable financier come with a boast, that he can bring a peppercorn into the exchequer, to the loss of millions to the nation? . . .

A great deal has been said without doors of the power, of the strength, of America. It is a topic that ought to be cautiously meddled with. In a good cause, on a sound bottom, the force of this country can crush America to atoms. I know the valour of your troops. I know the skill of your officers. There is not a company of foot that has served in America, out of which you may not pick a man of sufficient knowledge and experience to make a governor of a colony there. But on this ground, on the Stamp Act, when so many here will think it a crying injustice, I am one who will lift up my hands against it. In such a cause, your success would be hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like the strong man. She would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheath the sword in its scabbard, but to sheath it in the bowels of your countrymen? Will you quarrel with yourselves, now the whole House of Bourbon is united against you? . . . The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. The Americans have been wronged. They have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? Rather let prudence and temper come first from this side. I will undertake for America, that she will follow the example. There are two lines in a ballad of Prior's, of a man's behaviour to his wife, so applicable to you and your colonies, that I cannot help repeating them :—

“ Be to her faults a little blind :
Be to her virtues very kind.”

Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is, that the Stamp Act

should be repealed absolutely, totally, and immediately ; that the reason for the repeal should be assigned, because it was founded on an erroneous principle. At the same time, let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever : that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever—except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent.¹

Camden and Shelburne addressed the Lords from the same standpoint as Pitt, but Lord Mansfield, the Chief Justice, argued on sounder grounds that the doctrine of representation thus put forward was ill founded ; that a representative represents the whole realm, and not merely his own constituency ; that the colonies were as much represented in Parliament as the greater part of the people of England, where, among 9,000,000 people, no fewer than 8,000,000 were not entitled to vote ; and that no distinction could be drawn between Parliament's power of taxation and other kinds of legislation. The Stamp Act, in truth, as Macaulay says in his essay on Chatham, " was indefensible, not because it was beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile of discontents."

Pitt's speeches, however, had cleared the air, if they did not soothe the susceptibilities of either Rockingham or Grenville. Rockingham was forced to acknowledge their power when he wrote to the King on the following day, pointing out that the Administration would be shaken to the greatest degree if no further attempt were made to secure his support :

The events of yesterday in the House of Commons have shown the amazing powers and influence which Mr. Pitt has, whenever he takes part in debate. His declaration in the debate, roundly and positively against all the measures of the late Administration,

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. II., pp. 364-73.

has given him great credit, and gratified the animosity of many who now form the firm support of the present Administration.¹

Since Temple had ventured to take an entirely opposite course to Pitt on the American question, dissenting from him in every particular in the debate in the Lords, Rockingham judged that the time was ripe still further to widen the gulf between the brothers-in-law. George III., however, was not enthusiastic on the subject. He told Rockingham that he considered it extremely dangerous to write to Pitt, and that even seeing him alone would be preferable :

I recommend it strongly to you, to avoid a long conversation, by saying your business only permits you to call for a few minutes. Be extremely civil, but firm in what you say. . . . Talbot [he added, referring to his faithful Lord Steward of the Household, who would have been just as pliable if the royal will had bent him in any other direction], is as right as I can desire in the Stamp Act—strong for our declaring our right, but willing to repeal ; and has handsomely offered to attend the House daily, and answer the very indecent conduct of those who oppose with so little manners or candour.²

The fresh negotiations were foredoomed to failure, Pitt having little inclination to patch up a Cabinet which he had not himself made. Since he insisted on Newcastle's eviction as a preliminary step, Rockingham loyally stood by his old colleague, and left Pitt to his fate, endeavouring to compromise matters with a Bill which, while it would abolish the stamp duty, would at the same time include the statutable declaration of the rights of Parliament to tax the colonies. It is difficult to reconcile the King's express approval of repeal in the letter to Rockingham just quoted and his remark to Lord Strange on February 11 to the effect that his name in this connection was being most unjustly made

¹ Rockingham Memoirs.

² *Ibid.*

use of : " that he wished the Act to stand, but with such modifications as Parliament should judge necessary." ¹

It is significant, too, that Bute had remarked to Lyttelton on January 28 that he was strenuously opposed to the repeal of the Bill, but thought it could perhaps be modified, and that two nights later the King used exactly the same words to Lord Harcourt. " Lord Harcourt," continues Grenville in his diary, " suggested that his Majesty might make these his sentiments known, which might prevent the repeal of the Act, if his Ministers should push that measure. The King seemed averse to that, said he would never influence people in their parliamentary opinions, and that he had promised to support his Ministers." ² How deeply George III. was intriguing against the Bill it is now impossible to say, but there is no doubt that such opinions as he expressed to Lord Strange were duly circulated, with the result that Rockingham found himself faced with the possibility of a crushing defeat at the hands of both the King's Friends and the Grenville-Bedford combination.

Every day, on the other hand, brought convincing proof of the fierce opposition to the Stamp Act not only among the colonists, but also among the merchants at home, who were feeling more and more the serious effects of the non-importation policy with which the Americans had agreed to retaliate as soon as the Stamp Act became law. " Our trade is hurt," wrote Sir George Saville, a Yorkshire M.P., to Rockingham. " What the devil have you been doing ? For our part, we don't pretend to understand your politics and American matters, but our trade is hurt ; pray remedy it, and a plague on you if you won't !" ³ Yet when the petition from the united colonists assembled in Congress to deal with the crisis was presented to the House on January 27 the Commons declined to accept it. Thereupon Pitt again stood up for the colonists, repeating that they were perfectly entitled to resist an Act which robbed them of their constitutional rights. He painted the Americans as people who, in an ill-fated hour,

¹ Grenville Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 362.

² *Ibid.*, p. 353.

³ E. M. Chapman's " A Forgotten Friend of America : Henry Seymour Conway " (*New England Magazine*, October, 1898).

had left this country to fly from the Star Chamber and High Commission Courts. "The desert smiled upon them in comparison with this country. It was the evil genius of this country that had riveted among them this union, now called dangerous and federal."¹ The debate was made further memorable by the fact that it was on this occasion that Edmund Burke made his maiden speech in Parliament, though no one thought it worth while to report the words of such an unknown speaker.² He had but lately taken his seat in the House as member for Wendover, under the auspices of Rockingham, who "in a happy moment for himself and his party," as Lord Morley says in his study of "Burke," had been induced on taking office to offer the new-comer a post as his private secretary. How difficult was Rockingham's position in the present crisis is demonstrated by the following letter from a member of his Cabinet, who, with equal sincerity, disagreed with Pitt, and helped to make it impossible to carry the repeal without the Declaratory Act :

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE TO THE HON.
CHARLES YORKE.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, January 28, 1766.

Dear Brother,

I am very sorry you was not at the House yesterday. The Great Commoner never laid himself so open, never asserted such absurd and pernicious doctrines, and richly deserved to have been called to the bar, or sent to the Tower. The petition was from an illegal Congress, calling the right of Parliament in question ; and on that account I could have wished you had been there to bear your testimony against it.

I presume you have seen the resolutions which are intended for our House. Who is to be the mover I

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 289.

² Writing to Bennet Langton a few days later in reference to the Literary Club, Dr. Johnson says : " We have the loss of Burke's company since he has been engaged in public business, in which he has gained more reputation than perhaps any man at his first appearance ever gained before. He made two speeches for repealing the Stamp Act, which were publicly commended by Mr. Pitt, and have filled the town with wonder."

know not. I proposed some words to the third resolution about strengthening the King's hands, to preserve good order, &c., in the Colony—very *measured* ones, in my poor opinion—but which I think absolutely necessary. Some are substituted, which I do not like so well, and I flatter myself, you will approve mine. I heard such *stuff* thrown out at the meeting by the Duke of Newcastle, and such a tame acquiescence from most of the Lords, that I was obliged, in duty to the Crown, to tell them what I thought of the proceedings and principles which prevail in North America.

The question about *the right* is in general terms—all cases *whatsoever*. I presume it is the same in your House. Tell me *what you will do*, if taxation is proposed to be inserted. The Ministers desire to flatter North America, not to make it subordinate to this country. They dread the *idea* of sending more force there, which I think necessary to protect Government from tumult, and to enable the Governor to execute these resolutions.

What will come out of all this, the Lord above knows. I do not desire to trouble you with correspondence ; but if it was the last time I ever heard from you, I beg to know your opinion :—first, about being for or against making particular mention of the power of *taxing* ; secondly, about inserting some words in relation to strengthening the King's hands ; and thirdly, how we shall get rid of, or modify, the late Acts, which impose duties on North America.

Although the petition was refused, Benjamin Franklin was heard at the Bar of the House of Commons as special agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and allowed to state the case for the colonists with a clearness and boldness about which there could be no manner of mistake :

This motion probably originated with the Ministers, who were now striving for a repeal of the Act, and was seconded by Dr. Franklin's friends, who had confidence in the result ; but he was questioned in

the presence of a full House by various individuals of both parties, including the late Ministers ; and his answers were given without premeditation, and without knowing beforehand the nature or form of the question that was to be put. The dignity of his bearing, his self-possession, the promptness and propriety with which he replied to each interrogatory, the profound knowledge he displayed upon every topic presented to him, his perfect acquaintance with the political condition and internal affairs of his country, the fearlessness with which he defended the late doings of his countrymen and censured the measures of Parliament, his pointed expressions and characteristic manner ; all these combined to rivet the attention and excite the astonishment of his audience. And indeed, there is no event in this great man's life more creditable to his talents and character, or more honourable to his fame, than this examination before the British Parliament. It is an enduring monument of his wisdom, firmness, sagacity, and patriotism. When he was asked whether the Americans would pay the stamp duty if it were moderated, he answered : " No, never, unless compelled by force of arms." Again, when it was inquired how the Americans would receive another tax, imposed upon the same principles, he said : " Just as they do this ; they will never pay it." And again, he was asked whether the Americans would rescind their resolutions if the Stamp Act were repealed. To this he replied : " No, never ; they will never do it unless compelled by force of arms." He was also questioned as to the non-importation agreements, and asked whether the Americans would not soon become tired of them, and fall back to purchasing British manufactures as before. He said he did not believe they would ; that he knew his countrymen ; that they had materials, and industry to work them up ; that they could make their own clothes, and would make them ; that they loved liberty, and would maintain their rights. The examination was closed with the

two following questions and answers : " What used to be the pride of the Americans ? " He answered : " To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain." " What is now their pride ? " Answer : " To wear their old clothes over again till they can make new ones." ¹

This was not conciliatory language to those who honestly believed in the supremacy of the Mother Country, and the right of Parliament to levy an internal tax in America if it deemed it necessary. More than one shrewd observer predicted that the Government's days were drawing to an end when, early in February, it suffered two defeats in one week in the House of Lords :

LORD CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON.

[*" Lord Chesterfield's Letters."*]

February 11, 1766.

. . . Perhaps you expect from me a particular account of the present state of affairs ; but if you do, you will be disappointed, for no man living (and I still less than any one) knows what it is ; it varies, not only daily, but hourly. Most people think, and I amongst the rest, that the date of the present Ministers is pretty nearly out ; but how soon we are to have a New Style, God knows ! This, however, is certain, that the Ministers had a contested election in the House of Commons, and got it by eleven votes ; too small a majority to carry anything : the next day they lost a question in the House of Lords by three. The question in the House of Lords was, to enforce the execution of the Stamp Act in the Colonies *vi et armis*.² What conclusions you will draw from these premises, I do not know ; I protest I draw none ; but only stare at the present undecypherable state of affairs, which, in fifty years' experience, I have never seen any thing like. The Stamp Act has proved a most pernicious measure ; for, whether it is repealed

¹ Benjamin Franklin's Works. With Life by Jared Sparks.

² The Opposition carried this question against the Government—sixty-three to sixty.

or not, which is still very doubtful, it has given such terror to the Americans, that our trade with them will not be for some years what it used to be. Great numbers of our manufacturers at home will be turned a starving, for want of that employment which our very profitable trade to America found them; and hunger is always the cause of tumults and sedition. . . .

In his despair at finding his Government compelled, as Conway wrote to Lord Hertford on February 12, "to carry on a great public measure against the King's declared sentiments, and with a great number of his servants acting against them,"¹ Rockingham once more appealed to Pitt. But Pitt proved less amenable than ever. Only with the King himself would he discuss the matter seriously, and the King as yet preferred to manage without him. George III. could not have been so strongly opposed to the Repeal Bill as has been commonly supposed; otherwise that measure, which was brought before Parliament on February 21, together with the Declaratory Act, could not have passed through both Houses with majorities which surprised every one. The debate in the Commons, which resulted in a vote for repeal of 275 against 167, lasted until past one in the morning. No report of Pitt's speech on this occasion has been preserved, but the victory was generally regarded as another personal triumph for that statesman. "Heavens," exclaimed Lord Charlemont in a letter written at this time to Henry Flood, "what a fellow is this Pitt! I had his bust before; but nothing less than his statue will content me now."² Pitt himself wrote in ecstasy to his wife in the early hours of the same historic morning:

WILLIAM PITT TO LADY CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

February 22, past four, 1766.

Happy, indeed, was the scene of this glorious morning (for at past one we divided), when the sun

¹ Quoted in Hunt's "Political History of England, 1760-1801," p. 71.

² Chatham Correspondence.

of liberty shone once more benignly upon a country too long benighted. My dear love, not all the applauding joy which the hearts of animated gratitude, saved from despair and bankruptcy, uttered in the lobby, could touch me, in any degree, like the tender and lively delight, which breathes in your warm and affectionate note.

All together, my dearest life, makes me not ill to-day after the immense fatigue, or not feeling that I am so. Wonder not if I should find myself in a placid and sober fever, for tumultuous exultation you know I think not permitted to feeble mortal successes ; but my delight, heartfelt and solid as it is, must want its sweetest ingredient (if not its very essence) till I rejoice with my angel, and with her join in thanksgivings to protecting Heaven, for all our happy deliverances.

Thank you for the sight of Smith : his honest joy and affection charm me. Loves to the sweet babes, patriotic or not ; though I hope impetuous William is not behind in feelings of that kind. Send the saddle-horses if you please, so as to be in town early to-morrow morning. I propose, and hope, to execute my journey to Hayes by eleven.

Your ever loving husband,
W. PITT.

No better ending can be found for this chapter than Lady Chatham's fond letter in reply, with its little touch of wifely uneasiness on learning that he did not arrive home until half-past two in the morning. Obviously this must have been at second hand, for she speaks of the House dividing at half-past twelve, whereas Pitt's own letter clearly stated the time as " past one " :

LADY CHATHAM TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HAYES, *February 22, 1766.*

Joy to you, my dearest love. The joy of thousands is yours, under Heaven, who has crowned your

endeavours with such happy success. May the Almighty give to mine and to the general prayers, that you may wake without any increased gout, or any cold that may threaten it, by-and-bye ! I will hope that Mr. Onslow may have been a true prophet, and that what you saw yesterday, and what Johnson tells me you *heard*, the gratitude of a rescued people, have cured you.

I cannot tell you with what pleasure my eyes opened upon the news. All my feelings tell me that I hate oppression, and that I love zealously the honour of my dear husband. I must not be sorry that I do not see you to-day : it would be too great a hurry, and it is fit you should rejoice with those that have *triumphed* under you.

I hope that little Hester's cough is something better ; much I cannot say, but as it has begun to yield, I trust we shall soon get the better of it. She and John are by no means indifferent to the news. Eager Mr. William I have not yet seen. A thousand thanks for your dear note of yesterday. The hounds are just discovered in Dock Mead, and have animated us into a charming noise ; which would be inconvenient, if I had more to add, than that I am

Your ever faithful and loving wife,
CHATHAM.

You will keep Smith as long as you please, till it is convenient for you to see him. I do not understand the House dividing at half-past twelve, and your not being at home till half-past two.

CHAPTER IV

REPEAL OF THE STAMP ACT

Rockingham's Ministry Doomed—Sequel to the Repeal of the Stamp Act—American Rejoicings—Grenville's Cynicism—Grafton Resigns—Rockingham Offends the King—George III. Sends for Pitt—Pitt Supersedes Rockingham—His Mixed Administration—Townshend Strikes a Bargain—Pitt Created Earl of Chatham—His Loss of Popularity—Fresh Disturbances in America—The Mutiny Act—Fatal Riots among the Colonists—Views of George III.

It was not until March 17 that the Repeal Bill, after a series of stormy debates, passed the House of Lords with a majority of thirty-four, receiving the royal assent on the following day—"an event," says Burke, "that caused more universal joy throughout the British dominions than perhaps any other that can be remembered." It was by no means so universally applauded at home. The Government itself was not wholly in favour of it, especially after realising that all the popular credit for it was given to Pitt. Every one saw that the Rockingham Administration was in dire straits :

LORD CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON.

[*" Lord Chesterfield's Letters."*]

March 17, 1766.

You will probably wonder that I tell you nothing of public matters ; upon which I shall be as secret as Hotspur's gentle Kate, who would not tell what she did not know ; but what is singular, nobody seems to know any more of them than I do. People gape, stare, conjecture, and refine. Changes of the Ministry, or in the Ministry, at least, are daily reported and foretold ; but, of what kind, God only knows. It is also very doubtful whether Mr. Pitt will come into the administration or not ; the two present Secretaries are extremely desirous that he should ; but the

others think of the horse that called the man to its assistance. I will say nothing to you about American affairs, because I have not pens, ink, or paper enough to give you an intelligible account of them. They have been the subjects of warm and acrimonious debates, both in the Lords and Commons, and in all companies. The repeal of the Stamp Act is at last carried through. I am glad of it, and gave my proxy for it; because I saw many more inconveniences from the enforcing, than from the repealing it.

Having at last carried the repeal through both Houses, Rockingham did his best to make the colonists understand that he now relied upon them for their good behaviour. The following letter, written at his request, and corrected by him, was sent to Dr. Styles, a Dissenting minister living at Newport, Rhode Island, who had helped as much as any one to influence local feeling against the Stamp Act. Styles's correspondent was a Newport physician who, having had his house pulled down by the crowd, was forced to seek safety in London, where he gave evidence regarding the tumults at the Bar of the House of Commons. The copy of this letter, which found its way by some means into the Grenville Papers, bears a note to the effect that the original was corrected by Rockingham and Sir Charles Savile. Another note was afterwards added by Thomas Astle, who evidently shared Dr. Johnson's uncompromising hatred both of Whigs and Americans. "This letter," he wrote, "is important because it shows the arts used by the noble Marquess and his friends to quiet the Americans after the repeal of the Act."

DR. THOMAS MOFFATT TO DR. STYLES.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

LONDON, March 18, 1766.

Sir,

I persuade myself that you are under no expectation of receiving a letter from me, but as I am under an influence neither necessary nor very proper for me to explain to you, I cannot very easily

refrain from acquainting you that the Stamp Act of America is now repealed by Parliament, nor from endeavouring to communicate to you an idea of the great difficulties that have attended this work from the first moment it was known to be adopted by the King's servants, who with their combined influence and interest in both Houses of Parliament, have happily effected it against a sea of hindrance and opposition from many quarters felt, known and unseen. The difficulty of repealing this Act was also greatly increased by the conduct of the Colonies, who continued to assist and co-operate in embarrassing an administration that was warmly inclined to relieve America from every *bondage*,¹ and who had undertaken it against opposers that were very considerable and powerful in respect of their quality, capacity, connexions, and influence, and of whom I shall say no more than that they lost not the shadow of any opportunity either to prevent or retard the passing of the Bill for repealing the Stamp Act.

But the present Ministers of State, full of the tenderest and most benevolent sentiments towards America, set out in this undertaking upon a principle of reclaiming the British Colonies by marks of their moderation and grace rather than by instances of their power and resentment, which last was much and eagerly insisted on by many, but prudently averted by those at the helm of Government, who never have been, nor are yet insensible how much they have hazarded on this occasion for the sake of North America, and how much they have now depending upon the instant and future behaviour of the British American Colonies.

If, therefore, the repeal of the Stamp Act is received in North America with the expected and becoming spirit of gratitude and obedience really

¹ The word *bondage* was objected to by the Marquess of Rockingham, and the following words, "*from every degree of hardship, or degree of oppression,*" were substituted,

manifested by the restoration of public and private tranquillity, order and safety, then may the King's Ministers and all the true steadfast friends of America have abundant cause to rejoice, and be well satisfied with what they have now accomplished.

But if, on the contrary, the repealing of the Stamp Act should be received and considered by the colonists as a condescension or submission extorted from Sovereign and Supreme Authority, or if the occasion shall be celebrated with extravagancy and triumph indicatory of such sentiments or opinion, then may the Americans be said to have conspired in betraying their redeemers, and even of bringing them to open shame, *and what the ensuing consequences would be to America*¹ and them is but too plain to require any explanation from me to you.

Your function, station, and regard to your country, with many other motives, will naturally point out to you how necessary and incumbent it is to impress the minds of all people with a dutiful sense and spirit of gratitude, submission, peace, and good order, on an event so very favourable and gracious to North America.

I am, &c.

THOMAS MOFFATT.

When the news of the repeal first reached the colonists they were too overjoyed for the most part to pay much attention to the Declaratory Act asserting Parliament's supremacy over the colonies in all legislative matters. The colonists had gained their point over the Stamp Act, and that for the time being seemed enough. Boston went as wild with delight as it had with fury when the Act had first roused the people's resentment. The Liberty Tree was hung with lanterns instead of with effigies ; church bells rang with joy instead of funeral notes ; John Hancock, the wealthy young merchant

¹ The words in italics were objected to by Sir George Savile as not sufficiently explicit, and the following words were substituted in their stead : "*and will be even instrumental in overturning the present Administration, and of introducing into North America a different policy founded in, and supported by, force and rigour.*"

who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the coming struggle, distributed a pipe of madeira to the people assembled on the common facing his house ; and the Assembly voted not only a marble statue of Pitt to be erected in the town, but also one of the King himself, in lead and gilt, little knowing to what deadly use this last would be put in a few years' time. Similar rejoicings took place all over the colonies. Here, for example, is a letter from the Lieutenant-Governor of South Carolina, typical of many of its kind received in England at this time :

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR BULL TO GENERAL
CONWAY.

[*Prior Documents.*]

CHARLESTON, May 9, 1766.

Sir,

. . . I am to acquaint you, Sir, that within these two days we have received accounts from various parts that the Stamp Act is certainly repealed, which are attended with circumstances that leave no room to doubt the truth thereof. The joy of the people on this occasion was demonstrated by running almost to excess, at the thoughts of being relieved, not only from the distress which the present stagnation of business had brought on them, but also from the apprehensions of having further burthens laid upon them ; and, although I expect the arrival of Lord Charles Montague, our Governor, every day, the irksomeness of the late restraint renders the people so impatient of waiting for any further confirmation of this agreeable news, that as the repeal operates from the day the King gives his royal assent to the Bill, all the usual channels of business are now opened, and with them a prospect of good order, tranquillity, and prosperity through the province.

Newport, which had followed Boston's example in riotous demonstrations against the Stamp Act, also greeted the repeal with an outburst of gratitude and loyalty :

GOVERNOR WARD TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Prior Documents.*]

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, June 25, 1766.

Sir,

Having the honour of your Excellency's letter of the 31st of March last, enclosing a copy of the Act of Parliament, repealing the Act of last session for granting certain stamp-duties in America, &c., I laid it, with the enclosed copies, before the General Assembly, at their session on the 9th instant. Upon this most happy occasion, the General Assembly, with hearts deeply impressed with affection, loyalty and gratitude, unanimously resolved upon the enclosed humble address of thanks to his Majesty, in which I most sincerely concurred, and I beg leave to request your Excellency to do the colony the honour to present it to our most gracious sovereign.

Your Excellency is also pleased to inform us that a revision of the American Trade Laws is going to be the immediate object of Parliament, and that every relief which the state of our circumstances demands, or admits, will be afforded us.¹ This fresh instance of the kind and indulgent disposition of the British legislature is universally acknowledged with the most sincere and respectful gratitude. And as nothing is more certain than that the profits of the trade of the colonies will ultimately centre in Great Britain, I have no doubt but such regulations will have the most happy effect upon the commerce and manufactures of the Mother Country.

¹ These measures are thus summed up by Burke in his "Short Account of a Short Administration": "The trade of America was set free from injudicious and ruinous impositions; its revenue was improved and settled upon a rational foundation; its commerce extended with foreign countries; while all the advantages were secured to Great Britain, by 'the Act for repealing certain duties, and encouraging, regulating, and securing the trade of this kingdom, and the British dominions in America.' Materials were provided and insured to our manufactures; the sale of these manufactures was increased; the African trade preserved and extended; and the principles of the Act of Navigation pursued, and the plan improved, by 'the Act for opening certain ports in Dominica and Jamaica.' "

The wise, upright, and benevolent measures of the legislature, in the present session, have suppressed every appearance of murmuring and dissatisfaction, and diffused joy, tranquillity and happiness throughout the colonies. I can assure your Excellency that the most dutiful, affectionate and grateful returns will be made by them, and that they are so firmly attached to their Sovereign and to the British Constitution, and are so truly sensible of the parental goodness of the Mother Country, that she may rely upon every possible convenience and advantage from them ; and I cannot but promise myself, that such measures will continue to be pursued, as will so entirely conciliate the affections both of his Majesty's European and American subjects, that the only future contention between them will be, which shall most effectually promote his Majesty's service, and the interests of all his widely extended dominions.

In your Excellency's letter, the making compensation to such persons as have suffered in this colony from the madness of the people, is warmly recommended, upon which I can at present only say, that if any application of that kind should be made to the Assembly, I doubt not but they will take it into serious consideration, and that your Excellency may be assured of my utmost attention effectually to secure such persons from any future insult ; and, that as far as my example and influence may extend, they shall receive all proper respect and regard.

Before I conclude, I must beg leave to congratulate your Excellency upon the happy success of his Majesty's councils. The nation has been often blessed with a wise and upright administration, but to relieve several millions of his Majesty's faithful subjects, plunged in the deepest anxiety, distress and confusion, and to restore them to their former tranquillity, security and happiness, was an honour reserved for the present Ministry. I have the honour to be, &c.,

SAMUEL WARD.

George Grenville heard of the American rejoicings with cynical contempt. To the future Viscount Clare and Earl Nugent,¹ who had mentioned in a letter that "Reeve, the Quaker," had just learned from America of the universal joy produced there by the news of the Repeal Act, he wrote :

GEORGE GRENVILLE TO ROBERT NUGENT.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

WOTTON, June 21, 1766.

My dear Sir,

I have not the least doubt that our brethren in America will express great joy at the repeal of the Stamp Act, especially if they understand by it, as they justly may, notwithstanding the Declaratory Bill passed at the same time, that they are thereby exempted for ever from being taxed by Great Britain for the public support even of themselves, which this kingdom is to pay for them. I think they will be very ungrateful to our American patriots and our American merchants if they do otherwise ; and if your correspondent, Mr. Reeve, and the rest of those gentlemen, will do the same by Buckinghamshire, and double tax themselves to take off our taxes, I will engage for my countrymen here that they shall express as universal joy and more gratitude for the future than we shall meet with from Mr. Reeve's correspondents in America. The event, however, will show the merit which those who have contributed to this measure are entitled to from this kingdom for the plan which they have followed in Great Britain, Ireland and the colonies ; and I do assure you that I do not envy them all the praise which they will reap from it.

Truth to tell, the Rockingham Administration was in no condition to excite the envy of rival politicians at home. The placemen opposed it with impunity, knowing that it was merely tolerated by the King as a rather harmless Govern-

¹ Minor poet and friend of Goldsmith, who addressed his "Haunch of Venison" to him. He lived until 1788, and, according to Lord Dover, "passed his long life in seeking lucrative places and courting rich widows, in both of which pursuits he was eminently successful."

ment, lacking the confidence of the nation, and consequently playing into his hands until he should see fit to supplant it. Rockingham struggled on, refusing to acknowledge defeat when the King declined to punish the placemen who persistently voted against the Government. The Prime Minister still professed faith in himself to survive the shock of Grafton's resignation when that duke at length carried out his oft-repeated threat. Grafton all along had declared that he would not stay on without the accession of Pitt, and a final effort to induce that statesman to join them proving no more successful than the former overtures—Pitt again condemning the whole system of party politics and declining to interfere without his Majesty's express command—he handed in his seals of office. Rockingham had expedited his departure by renouncing the doctrine of Grafton that Pitt was "the only man who stood sufficiently above the rest to give strength and stability to the Administration":

There was now no hesitation in him to declare that *he would never advise his Majesty to call Mr. Pitt into his closet, that this was a fixed resolution to which he would adhere.* He added that he saw no reason why the present Administration, (if they receiv'd assurances from the King that people in office were to hold their posts at the good will of the Ministers), should not carry on very well, and with honour to themselves, the King's business. The first of these I must consider as an absolute opposition to Mr. P. coming into the Ministry at all. We know that it is with the King alone that he can settle it, and I can feel Mr. Pitt's reasons to be strong on that head. I also feel very well that there is no quarter from which that advice can come to the King, if Lord Rockingham does not make a part. His lordship has often declared to me, that he wished to see Mr. Pitt forming an Administration, but the hardship he then complained of was, that he was press'd to say beforehand that he would at all events form a part, whereas he desired that it might depend on the consistency he found it with his honour so to do,

and that the leaving in or turning out such as he had press'd into office was to be his guide in that. As to the other measure, I differ extremely. The weakness of the Cabinet as now composed, the great bodies of men not included, many of ability, with a large share of those of property (even supposing Mr. Pitt and his friends neuter) present immediately such a determin'd opposition, that no point essentially right for this country can be carried through with certainty by Administration; and I know not whether it is more pitiful, or more the part of a slave, to be the whole sessions, and indeed the year out, fighting against such difficulties as will necessarily arise; knowing at the same time, that the very support, which has not come cordially from the closet, and on which hereafter you are to depend, may more likely deceive you; as it is indeed only to be obtain'd from the dread there is of seeing matters once more in confusion.¹

The appointment of the Duke of Richmond as the new Secretary of State added nothing to the strength of the Government, and offended the King. Rockingham struggled manfully, however, to steer a useful course with his weakened crew, carrying through measures before the end of the session which repealed the unpopular Cider Tax, and declared General Warrants illegal. "We shall have a rough ocean to sail through," he wrote to Sir George Savile towards the end of May, "but as I hope our bottom is sound, we may weather all storms, or, at least, if we should be wrecked, we shall not suffer in honour, or as private men."² Rockingham's confidence was considerably greater than his administrative gifts. He offended the King—whom he was powerless to oppose—not only by the Commons' declaration of the illegality of General Warrants and the appointment of Richmond as Grafton's successor, but also by failing to obtain a parliamentary allowance for his Majesty's younger brothers. When Rockingham in June requested that some

¹ Grafton to Conway, April 22, 1766 (Grafton Memoirs, pp. 71-2).

² Rockingham Correspondence, Vol. I., p. 347.

peers might be created as a proof that he possessed the royal confidence George III. declined :

As to the Peerages [he wrote to Rockingham] I thought I had yesterday, as well as on many former occasions, expressed an intention of not, at least for the present, increasing the Peerage, and remain entirely now of that opinion.¹

The hopeless condition of the Ministry at this period is thus depicted by Chesterfield :

LORD CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON.

[*" Lord Chesterfield's Letters."*]

. . . What account shall I give you of Ministerial affairs here? I protest I do not know. . . . It is a total dislocation and *dérangement* ; consequently a total inefficiency. When the Duke of Grafton quitted the seals, he gave that very reason for it, in a speech in the House of Lords : he declared, " that he had no objection to the persons or to the measures of the present Ministers ; but that he thought they wanted strength and efficiency to carry on proper measures with success, and that he knew but one man " (meaning, as you will easily suppose, Mr. Pitt) " who could give them that strength and solidity ; that, under this person, he should be willing to serve in any capacity, not only as a General Officer, but as a pioneer, and would take up a spade and mattock. . . ." To tell you the speculations, the reasonings, and the conjectures either of the uninformed, or even of the best-informed public, upon the present wonderful situation of affairs, would take up more time than either you or I can afford, though we have neither of us a great deal of business at present.

The last straw was the resignation of the Earl of Northington as Lord Chancellor early in July after quarrelling with his colleagues over a scheme for the civil government of Quebec, which he denounced as totally unworthy of practical

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. I., p. 347.

statesmen. Having received the Great Seal from the Lord Chancellor, and heard his reason for refusing to attend any more Cabinet meetings, the King informed Rockingham that he would himself decide upon the proper course to be taken in the existing crisis. His first step was to summon Pitt to Court, through his friend Northington :

GEORGE III. TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

RICHMOND LODGE, *July 7, 1766.*

Mr. Pitt,

Your very dutiful and handsome conduct the last summer makes me desirous of having your thoughts how an able and dignified Ministry may be formed. I desire, therefore, you will come, for this salutary purpose, to town.

I cannot conclude without expressing how entirely my ideas concerning the basis on which a new administration should be erected, are consonant to the opinion you gave on that subject in Parliament a few days before you set out for Somersetshire.¹

I convey this through the channel of the Earl of Northington ; as there is no man in my service on whom I so thoroughly rely, and who, I know, agrees with me so perfectly in the contents of this letter.

GEORGE R.

Pitt's extreme servility in reply must have caused the King to congratulate himself on the success of his astute diplomacy. The hostility of the Great Commoner to party politics had played into his Majesty's hands to perfection. But a little more was now needed to complete the conquest for the Crown :

WILLIAM PITT TO GEORGE III.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

Tuesday, [July 8, 1766.

Sire,

Penetrated with the deepest sense of your Majesty's boundless goodness to me, and with a

¹ "It is to be regretted," writes the editor of the *Chatham Correspondence*, "that no trace of the speech referred to by his Majesty has been preserved."

heart overflowing with duty and zeal for the honour and the happiness of the most gracious and benign Sovereign, I shall hasten to London, as fast as I possibly can; wishing that I could change infirmity into wings of expedition, the sooner to be permitted the high honour to lay at your Majesty's feet, the poor but sincere offering of the little services of

Your Majesty's
most dutiful subject,
and devoted servant,
WILLIAM PITT.

It was not until July 12 that Pitt was able to make the journey to London and prostrate himself in person at his Majesty's feet, but the news that he had been sent for was widely known, and naturally freely commented on. Rockingham and his friends suspected that the old enemy Bute must be at the bottom of the mischief :

LORD HARDWICKE TO THE MARQUESS OF
ROCKINGHAM.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

July 10, 1766.

I could have wished his Majesty had been a little *pressed* upon the reasons which determined him to send for Mr. Pitt *just now*, after letting slip so many much more proper occasions, particularly that of the Duke of Grafton's resignation; and declaring so often, that he thought such a *step* would be personally disgraceful to himself, and that he had twice before acted below his dignity, in seeing Mr. Pitt without knowing what he would propose.

I am surprised your lordship has not more Court intelligence about the motions and intrigues of Carlton House, and the constant undermining practices of the Scotch *Thane*, who resides as little in the country this summer as he has done for the two last, and continues to divide his time between Luton and South Audley Street.

No easy task was it that Pitt undertook when the Rockingham Administration ceased to exist, and he proceeded to form that curious combination which Burke has so aptly described as a "tessellated pavement without cement." Charles Townshend left the profitable Paymaster's Office for the Exchequer with great reluctance, and, as George III. informed his new Prime Minister, did not hesitate to strike a bargain with the King himself before accepting :

GEORGE III. TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

ST. JAMES'S,

15 m. past four p.m., July 25, 1766.

Mr. Pitt,

I think it necessary to acquaint you with my having seen Mr. Townshend ; who expressed to me his reasons for having determined to stay in the Pay Office. I told him there must be some misunderstanding, for that you had this morning acquainted me with his desire of being Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He left me, uncertain what he should do ; but that, if he took it, he must say it was by my express commands, not his choice ; that what he held was more honourable and worth seven thousand pounds per annum, whilst the other was but two thousand five hundred pounds ; that if he accepted, he hoped he should have some indemnification ; that Lord Rockingham being quiet would much depend on Mr. Dowdeswell's remaining Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In short, he left me in a state of great uncertainty, and means to talk again with you. From Lord Rockingham I learned, that if Lord Dartmouth is not made a third Secretary of State, he will retire ; therefore, a first Lord of Trade must be thought of.

GEORGE R.

The great stumbling-block, as before, was Pitt's uncertain brother-in-law, Temple, who, jealous of the great man's power, declined the Treasury, vowing to the King that he

"would not go in like a child, to come out like a fool." This time Pitt decided to do without him, after a quarrel which sent Temple back in a huff to Stowe, whence he wrote this letter on the subject to his sister :

EARL TEMPLE TO LADY CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

STOWE, July 27, 1766.

. . . I should most willingly have avoided with you the subject of the present times, but the contents of your letter make it indispensably necessary for me not to leave you a stranger to the indignation with which I received the proposition of being stuck into a Ministry as a great cipher at the head of the Treasury, surrounded with other ciphers, all named by Mr. Pitt, of a different complexion from me, with some of whom I had so essentially differed on many accounts, and more especially with all during the last session. But I was determined my temper should be equal to my firmness, conversing with an old friend, whom I had much esteemed, and to whom I had, with so much partiality, so much deferred through life, labouring, as he did at the time, under bodily infirmity.

My brother James is no stranger to my thoughts upon this matter, even after cool reflection on my pillow, and I told the King and my Lord Chancellor to this effect, amongst a variety of other things, that though I was most willing to sacrifice my brother's ¹ pretensions, as he was himself, to Mr. Pitt's indisposition towards him, for the sake of public and general union, yet as that in my opinion was not the plan, I would not *go in like a child, to come out like a fool.*

To you, my dear sister, I will say no more on this extensive subject, satisfied as I am with your fair, upright, and amiable conduct throughout. In certain situations, appearances are realities, and, in all, false appearances I hate. Our reciprocal country

¹ George Grenville.

Richmond Lodge
July 29.th 1766
25 past Five P.M.

M.^{rs} Pitt,

I have signed

this day the Warrant for Creating You an Earl
& shall with pleasure receive You in that
Capacity tomorrow, as well as entrust You with
My Privy Seal; as I know the Earl of Chatham
will zealously give his Aid towards restoring
all party distinctions & restoring that subordination
to Government which alone can preserve that
inestimable Blessing Liberty, from degenerating
into Licentiousness.

George

LETTER FROM GEORGE III TO WILLIAM PITT
ON CREATING HIM EARL OF CHATHAM

visits cannot, therefore, take place as we intended. Be assured, however, that you will always find in me towards you the warmest affection, founded in real esteem, and that I am

Your most truly affectionate brother,
 TEMPLE.

Temple's quarrel with his brother-in-law was not patched up for more than two years. Within a few days of the foregoing letter William Pitt took the Privy Seal and became Earl of Chatham, as signified by the King himself :

GEORGE III. TO WILLIAM PITT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

RICHMOND LODGE,

July 29, 1766, 25 m. past five p.m.

Mr. Pitt,

I have signed this day the warrant for creating you an Earl,¹ and shall with pleasure receive you in that capacity to-morrow, as well as entrust you with my privy seal ; as I know the Earl of Chatham will zealously give his aid towards destroying all party distinctions, and restoring that subordination to Government, which can alone preserve that inestimable blessing, Liberty, from degenerating into Licentiousness.

GEORGE R.

The title cost Pitt the blind adoration of the crowd. The City of London, the chief stronghold of his followers, had prepared to celebrate his accession to office by a grand illumination, but as soon as his title was announced all the lamps were countermanded.

Another lively picture of the new Ministry is found in a letter written on the following day to the new Chief Justice by his brother, the Secretary to the Lord Chamberlain :

¹ The event was thus announced in the *London Gazette* of the following evening : " St. James's, July 30. The King has been pleased to grant unto the right honourable William Pitt, Esq., and his heirs male, the dignity of a viscount and earl of Great Britain, by the titles of Viscount Pitt of Burton Pynsent, and Earl of Chatham, in the County of Kent."

SIR ROBERT WILMOT TO SIR JOHN EARDLEY WILMOT.

[Chatham Correspondence.]

August 2, 1766.

The curtain is now drawn up : the actors are coming upon the stage. I understand you have a part, which, though not your own choice, has been assigned to you in so distinguished, so honourable a manner, that you certainly ought, cheerfully, graciously, and gratefully, to accept it. 'Tis a duty which you owe to the King, to your friends, to your family, to yourself ; and the duty required is neither hard nor unprofitable. You come in without terms, conditions, stipulations of any kind. It is presumed you will do your duty (and nothing more is required) ; and always, when called upon, give your advice in council, according to the rectitude of what shall be proposed, and not with a ministerial warp, which scandalises the man. You will, at all events, be a permanent pillar, though the new Ministry, as it probably will, topple down ; for Lord Bath has risen from the dead, and has drawn the thorns out of the feet of every competitor, and has stuck them into those of his friends ; and when the ball comes to be tossed up again, as every body thinks it must, and a new match played, the lame ones must lag behind. One set of men are thoroughly united ; another, whom artifice has severed and set at variance, may now, and will, if they be not infatuated, piece again ; and the number and strength of the new comers do not seem sufficient to carry away the ball from both. Lord Northington has secured to himself four thousand a year for his life, when he ceases to be President [of the Council]. The Duke of Grafton hates business, and will soon be weary of the Treasury ; Charles Townsend thinks himself injured by having the Chancellorship of the Exchequer crammed down his throat ; the Duke of Portland, by the advice and at the earnest request of his friends, for the present holds the Staff. In short, the city have brought in their verdict of *felo-de-se* against William, Earl of Chatham.

Meantime there was developing a fresh rift within the lute in the American colonies. The repeal had been followed by demands on the part of the British Government for compensation for those who had suffered during the riots and for supplies for the troops quartered upon the inhabitants. New York, like Boston and the other towns which had so recently given themselves up to loyal rejoicings, resented these fresh attempts at what was regarded as unwarrantable interference. Their victory over the Stamp Act, though received with every sign of enthusiastic loyalty, had at the same time given strength to very definite ideas regarding their rights, and their power to enforce those rights when joined as a united nation in times of grave emergency. The kind of petty disputes which marked the history of their relations with the Mother Country at this period is illustrated by the attitude of the Legislature of New York towards the provisions of the Mutiny Act for furnishing supplies to the troops :

GOVERNOR SIR HENRY MOORE TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Prior Documents.*]

FORT GEORGE, NEW YORK, *June 20, 1766.*

Sir,

The packet having suffered so much in her last voyage as to stand in need of some considerable reparations before she could venture to sea again, I am enabled, by the delay which this misfortune has occasioned, to transmit to you some accounts of our proceedings here, since I had the honour of your letter, notifying the repeal of the Stamp Act. The General Assembly having desired, at the close of the last session, to sit again in the spring for the dispatch of some business, their meeting was put off, by different prorogations, till the 11th day of this month, and I have here enclosed my speech at the opening of the sessions, and the addresses of the Council and Assembly. From the general satisfaction which was expressed here by all ranks and degrees of people, I had all the reason to expect that the earliest opportunity would have been taken to show their gratitude for such signal favours received.

You may then easily judge, Sir, how much I was surprised to find myself disappointed in my expectations ; for, upon General Gage's application to me for bedding, utensils, &c., agreeable to Act of Parliament for his Majesty's troops then under orders of march for this city, the consideration of the message I sent was postponed till after the arrival of the troops, by which they were put to very great inconveniences, and afterwards such resolutions were entered into that appeared to me as evasive as they were unexpected. After informing the general with what had passed, I sent a second message, which was ordered in such a manner as to require a categorical answer, which laid them under some difficulties ; for, although it appeared plainly that they did not choose to show that obedience which was due to an Act of Parliament, it was as evident that they were too apprehensive of the ill consequences which would attend their refusing to comply with it. They have now ordered a Bill to be brought in, for providing barracks, fire-wood, candles, bedding, and utensils for the kitchen as demanded, but the articles of salt, vinegar and cider or beer, are not to be included in the Bill, being furnished with this pretence to leave them out, that they are not provided in Europe for his Majesty's troops which are in barracks.

As the general is satisfied that nothing more can be obtained at this time, I hope that I shall be thought to act for his Majesty's service in passing the Bill in its present state, for the difficulties which would arise in the other colonies upon a like application from their Governors, may by this step be obviated, as I am persuaded, from what I have seen, that the example of this province, in making the provision required, will have a greater influence on the proceedings of the others than any other motive whatsoever, and it will appear on the minutes of the Assembly that I made the same demand during their last session, without being able to obtain the smallest sum for that purpose. This, Sir, is a bare relation

of what has passed here, without aggravating or extenuating any one circumstance, and as matters of fact speak best for themselves, I thought it proper to lay the whole of this proceeding before you, as it will, at one view, show the deference here paid to Acts of Parliament, and what may be our expectations on a future occasion. You will be pleased to observe that my message is treated merely as a requisition made here, and that they have carefully avoided the least mention of the Act on which it is founded, and it is my opinion, that every Act of Parliament, when not backed by a sufficient power to enforce it, will meet with the same fate here.

I am, &c.,

H. MOORE.

More serious disturbances occurred when, after the landing of the unwelcomed troops in New York, the red-coats cut down the Liberty Pole which had been hoisted during the recent crisis. The pole was re-erected by Liberty Boys, and again cut down, only to be set up once more with an iron sheath. These angry happenings did not take place without bloodshed and rankling bitterness; but there were more dangerous outbreaks farther afield, as the Commander-in-Chief testified to General Conway as one of the Secretaries of State :

MAJOR-GENERAL GAGE TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Prior Documents.*]

NEW YORK, July 15, 1766.

In my letter of the 24th of June, I had the honour to acquaint you that his Majesty's Twenty-Eighth Regiment, under the command of Major Browne, had been ordered into Dutchesse County in this province, to assist the civil officers in putting the laws in execution, and to quell some dangerous riots. A small body of the light infantry company was fired upon by the rioters, and three of them wounded : they returned the fire, wounded some, pursued and dispersed the rest, notwithstanding their numbers.

The disturbances had spread into the County of Albany, where a skirmish happened between the sheriff, with about two hundred followers, and a party of the rioters. Some few were killed and wounded on both sides, but the sheriff and his people were put to flight. A great many prisoners have been taken or delivered themselves up, and among them are several principals. After restoring tranquillity to the country, the regiment came to this place, leaving a captain and fifty men to guard the gaols, and brought with them the principal ring-leaders of the whole confederacy. The magistrates commend the regiment greatly, as well for their spirit and readiness in apprehending the rioters, as for their strictness of discipline, not having taken the least thing during their stay in the country, and even refusing to plunder the houses of some of the proclaimed rioters, though desired to do it. . . .

The Governor of New York received his reply from Shelburne, then twenty-nine years of age, who had just succeeded the Duke of Richmond as Secretary of State for the Southern Department. Shelburne clearly stated the King's views regarding the ready obedience which he expected from the colonists to such Acts as his Majesty and his Parliament "thought proper to enact for their benefit and protection"—views which little accorded with the growing feeling in America that the various provinces, while ready to swear allegiance to the King's person, were independent in every respect of the Legislature at Westminster :

THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO SIR HENRY MOORE.

[*Prior Documents.*]

WHITEHALL, August 9, 1766.

Sir,

I took the first opportunity, after his Majesty had been most graciously pleased to entrust me with the seals of the Southern Department, to lay before him your letter of the 20th of June, giving an account of the general satisfaction expressed by all ranks an

degrees of people on the repeal of the Stamp Act, and likewise your reasons for assenting to a Bill for providing barracks, firewood, candles, bedding and utensils for the kitchen for the King's troops as demanded, notwithstanding the articles of salt, vinegar, cider and beer, be not included, under a pretence that they are not provided for troops lodged in barracks in Europe.

I have his Majesty's commands to acquaint you of the satisfaction he feels in the happiness of his subjects, arising from the tender care and consideration of his Parliament ; but I am ordered to signify to you at the same time, that as it is the indispensable duty of his subjects in America to obey the Acts of the Legislature of Great Britain, the King both expects and requires a cheerful obedience to the same ; and it cannot be doubted that his Majesty's province of New York, after the lenity of Great Britain so recently extended to America, will not fail duly to carry into execution the Act of Parliament passed last session for quartering his Majesty's troops, in the full extent and meaning of the Act, without referring to the usage of other parts of his Majesty's dominions, where the Legislature has thought proper to prescribe different regulations, and which cannot be altered any more than in North America, except upon a respectful and well-grounded representation of the hardship or inconvenience.

These considerations, I am convinced, must of themselves have so much weight with the Assembly of New York, not only in the present conjuncture, when it is natural to suppose the minds of men retain sensible impressions of what has lately passed, but, upon other occasions which may call for a ready obedience, that I cannot think it necessary for me to enlarge further upon their importance. I must only, Sir, in general, add, that I hope and believe, that a very little time, together with that temperate administration of government, which your regard to the people under it must make you naturally incline

to, and that firmness which your duty to the King equally requires, will allay whatever remains of those heats which have so unhappily for America prevailed, and which, if continued, must prove of the most fatal consequence to whatever province they are suffered in. I am therefore persuaded that the Assembly will lose no occasion that offers of convincing his Majesty that the people of New York will yield to no other part of his Majesty's subjects in duty, loyalty, and obedience to such laws as the King and Parliament have thought proper to enact for their benefit and protection.

I am, &c.,
SHELburnE.

The independent attitude of the colonists is demonstrated in the following extract from a letter to Shelburne from the Governor of New Jersey, who, like Sir Henry Moore in New York, complained that he was forced to accept anything but a ready obedience to the provisions of the Mutiny Act :

GOVERNOR FRANKLIN TO THE
EARL OF SHELburnE.

[*Prior Documents.*]

BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY, *December 18, 1766.*

. . . I should mention, however, that in the " Act for supplying the several barracks erected in this colony, with furniture and other necessities for accommodating the King's troops, in or marching through this colony," they [the General Assembly of New Jersey] have, instead of specifying the several articles required to be furnished by the Act of Parliament, empowered the barrack masters to provide " firewood, bedding, blankets, and such other necessities, as have been heretofore usually furnished to the several barracks within this colony." I did all I could to prevail on them to insert the very words of the Act of Parliament, and to empower the barrack-masters to furnish, at the expense of the province, the same articles as were therein required ; but it was to no purpose. They said they had always

furnished everything which was necessary, that the officers and soldiers who had been quartered here never complained, but, on the contrary, many of them acknowledged they were better accommodated here than they had ever been at barracks in Europe ; they added, that they looked upon the Act of Parliament for quartering soldiers in America, to be virtually as much an act for laying taxes on the inhabitants as the Stamp Act, and that it was more partial, as the troops were kept in a few of the colonies, whereby others were exempted from contributing anything towards the expense. I was therefore obliged to take the Act as it was tendered, or to let his Majesty's troops remain unprovided with necessaries. I have, however, the pleasure of finding the regiment stationed in this province perfectly satisfied with their quarters. No complaints whatever have been made to me, and I believe there are but few, if any, articles of consequence, required by the Act of Parliament, but what they are furnished with here.

All, therefore, was not so well as John Adams depicted when he wrote in November, 1766 :

The people are as quiet and submissive to Government as any people under the sun, as little inclined to tumults, riots and seditions as they were ever known to be since the first foundation of the Government. The repeal of the Stamp Act has composed every wave of popular disorder into a smooth and peaceful calm.

CHAPTER V

A FATAL POLICY

Difficulties of New Administration—Chatham's Dominating Power—Burke's Tribute—Corn Riots at Home—Chatham and the Rockingham Whigs—Playing into the King's Hands—Reconstruction of the Cabinet—George's III.'s Hatred of Grenville—The Indian Problem—Ominous News from America—New York's Defiance and Submission—Townshend's Revenue Act—A Wonderful Speaker—Chatham's Mysterious Illness—Its Paralysing Effect upon the Government—George III. Intervenes—Chatham Worn Out—A Pathetic Portrait—Junius and Thomas Whately—The Rise of Burke—Death of Townshend—Massachusetts Leads the Revolt against his Revenue Act—North Succeeds Townshend—His Rash Vow—American Opposition and Petitions—Lord Hillsborough's New Office—Francis Bernard—The Hutchinson Letters—The Liberty Riots at Boston—Massachusetts Assembly Dissolved—Red-coats in Boston—Dissensions in the Cabinet—General Amherst's Successor—Commodore Hood's Opinion of Bernard—Hutchinson's Chief Offence.

Now that Pitt, or rather Chatham, as the new Earl must in future be called, had united with the King, the Whigs were powerless against the ascendancy of the Crown and encroachments of a corrupt House of Commons. To add to the difficulties of the new Administration, Pitt was bedridden with gout almost from the first, his letters from his house at North End, Hampstead, and alternately from Bath, being full of lamentations and regrets on the subject. Grafton, who acted as his second in command, was an unreliable reed and helpless without his chief. "Lord Chatham's illness," he complains, "and indeed his constant bad state of health, often making it impracticable to talk with him on business or even to get access to him, brought a weakness on the Ministry which will be easily conceived, and placed us, who wished to forward his views, in the most uncomfortable and perplexing of all situations, scarce knowing what line to adopt; for Lord Chatham did never open to us, or to the Cabinet in general, what was his real and fixed plan." ¹

¹ Grafton Memoirs, p. 111.

This shows clearly the dire confusion resulting from Chatham's autocratic rule, but it also proves how dominating was the influence of the one man who might, had he been so minded and chosen the right men as his lieutenants, have led the liberty-loving people who idolised him in a constitutional struggle which would have averted the American War of Independence and left a nobler chapter to be written in the history of the whole English-speaking world.

Even Townshend, keenly as he had resented being transferred to the Exchequer, was forced to acknowledge the intellectual supremacy of his chief after attending his first Cabinet meeting under him, at which the general situation in Europe had been discussed. "Mr. Townshend," writes Grafton, "was particularly astonished, and owed to me, as I was carrying him in my carriage home, that Lord Chatham had just shown to us what inferior animals we were : and that, as much as he had seen of him before, he did not conceive, till that night, his superiority to be so very transcendent. Mr. Townshend, however, soon forgot the great and extensive mind of the Minister," and afterwards in the House of Commons, "no longer," as the same authority remarks, "within the lash of Mr. Pitt's eloquence, took more on himself than he would have ventured under any other circumstances." ¹ This reminds us of Burke's eloquent tribute in his great speech on American taxation in 1774, where he said :

If ever Lord Chatham fell into a fit of the gout, or if any other cause withdrew him from public cares, principles directly the contrary of his own were sure to predominate. When his face was hid but for a moment, his whole system was on a wide sea, without chart or compass. The gentlemen, his particular friends, who, with the names of various departments of Ministry, were admitted to seem as if they acted a part under him, with a modesty that becomes all men, and with a confidence in him, which was justified even in its extravagance by his superior abilities, had never, in any instance, presumed upon

¹ Grafton Memoirs, p. 105.

any opinion of their own. Deprived of his guiding influence, they were whirled about, the sport of every gust, and easily driven into any port ; and as those who joined with them in manning the vessel were the most directly opposite to his opinions, measures, and character, and far the most artful and most powerful of the set, they easily prevailed so as to seize upon the vacant, unoccupied, and derelict minds of his friends ; and instantly they turned the vessel wholly out of the course of his policy. As if it were to insult as well as to betray him, even long before the close of the first session of his administration, when everything was publicly transacted, and with great parade, in his name, they made an act declaring it highly just and expedient to raise a revenue in America. For even then, Sir, even before this splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and, for his hour, became lord of the ascendant. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend, officially the reproducer of this fatal scheme.

That Pitt had lost little of his power to impress observers with the magic of his personality at this period is attested by another witness. "The great man," wrote an agent of the East India Company to Lord Clive, after interviewing the new Prime Minister before the end of 1766, "is certainly not only the most vigorous but the most comprehensive and judicious Minister the country has ever known."

The problem of the future of the East India Company and of the vast territorial acquisitions made possible by Clive, together with the dangers from the prevailing scarcity of corn in Europe, had thrust the American question for the time being into the background of the public mind in England. Interminable rains had ruined the harvest both at home and on the Continent ; the price of bread had risen with a rush ; and fears were entertained that monopolists would combine to export corn to sell at a high profit abroad, leaving the

country faced with the miseries of famine. These apprehensions had already resulted in fatal riots in many parts of the kingdom, and the disturbances were not quelled until the Government issued an order in council laying an embargo on ships preparing to sail with cargoes of corn. Walpole mentions this after a reference to his own sickness which is too amusing to be omitted :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, September 25, 1766.

When I told you in my last that I was ill, I did not think it would prove so very serious as it has done. It turned to an attack on my stomach, bowels, and back, with continued vomitings for four days. You will ask what it was ? so did I. The physician (for Lord Hertford and Mr. Conway sent for one, whether I would or not) pronounced it the gout ; and because he had pronounced so, was determined it should be so, and plied me with fire, gunpowder, and all the artillery of the College, till, like a true general, he had almost reduced the place to a heap of ashes. This made me resolved to die in my own way, that is coolly. I refused to take a drop more of his prescriptions ; have mended ever since ; and am really now quite well, and quite convinced that it was no more the gout than the smallpox, but a violent disorder in my stomach. This was my first physician, and shall be my last. How dear one pays for health and justice ; and how seldom one obtains them even for buying ! . . .

Would you believe that such a granary as England has been in as much danger as your mountains ? not of famine, but of riots. The demands for corn have occasioned so much to be exported, that our farmers went on raising the price of wheat till the poor could not buy bread ; indeed, they will eat none but the best. Insurrections have happened in several counties, and worse were apprehended. Yesterday the King, by the unanimous advice of

his Council, took upon him to lay an embargo, which was never done before in time of peace. It will make much clamour among the interested, both in interest and in politics ; but in general will be popular. The dearness of everything is enormous and intolerable, for the country is so rich that it makes everybody poor. The luxury of tradesmen passes all belief. They would forfeit their characters with their own profession if they exercised an economy that would be thought but prudent in a man of quality in any other country. Unless the mob will turn reformers and rise, or my Lord Clive sends over diamonds enough for current coin, I do not see how one shall be able soon to purchase necessities.

It was the polite thing to sneer at tradesmen in those days, " trade " including almost every kind of employment which was not of the political placemen and sinecure type—that easy and profitable employment which kept Horace Walpole in clover all his life, and provided so many Georgian bucks and dandies with the wherewithal to plumb the depths of debauchery. Richard Rigby, perhaps the most unworthy, and certainly the most unblushing, placeman of them all, furnishes at this time a characteristic example of the open and unashamed traffic in public offices which then corrupted the whole political life of England :

Lord Beauchamp [he wrote to his patron, Bedford, on September 25] is made Constable of Dublin Castle for life, in the room of old Mr. Hatton. Lord Hertford gives Mr. Hatton a thousand pounds to quit his employment, which was five hundred a year ; a thousand more is added ; and Lord Beauchamp has got it for his life. There is another job done for another son in a Custom House place, which will be a thousand a year more ; in short, what with sons and daughters, and boroughs, and employments of all kinds, I never heard of such a trading voyage as his lordship's has proved.¹

¹ Bedford Correspondence, Vol. II., pp. 345-6.

We have it on the authority of his lieutenant, Grafton, that Chatham, with all his pre-eminent gifts, did not possess that of conciliating mankind : " He was admired, but was rarely liked " ; and it was not long before all the Rockingham Whigs who had retained office under the new *régime*, with the exception of Conway, sent in their resignations. The cause of this and the reconstruction which ensued are described by Walpole, who helped to persuade Conway against resigning with the rest :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, December 8, 1766.

We have been in so strange and uncertain a situation lately that though I am always very punctual in giving you warning of any revolution, I could not till this very post say a word that would have tended to anything but to puzzle and alarm you. I now think the cloud pretty well dispersed, and am rather tranquil about what I feared the most. The internal agitations of factions are less easily described than public events, or even than parliamentary occurrences ; however, I will relate to you as briefly as I can, what has or had liked to have happened.

About three weeks ago Lord Chatham suddenly removed Lord Edgcumbe from being Treasurer of the Household, to make room for Mr. Shelley (no very commendable choice), and without the knowledge of Mr. Conway, who was hurt both at the neglect of himself and the disgrace of one of his friends. The rest of the late Administration, who remained, and still more they who had been set aside, were highly offended. Mr. Conway tried every method of satisfying Lord Edgcumbe, but Lord Chatham was inflexible, especially as the party had threatened to resign. While Mr. Conway was labouring a reconciliation, indeed with little prospect of accomplishing it, his friends flew out and left him, without any previous notice, on the opening of the great question on the East Indies. This was very

unkind behaviour to him, and was followed by the resignations of the Duke of Portland, Lord Bessborough, Lord Scarborough, Lord Monson, Sir Charles Saunders, and one or two more. Not content with this, Lord Rockingham and the Cavendishes have never ceased endeavouring to persuade Mr. Conway to resign. Lord Chatham paid him the greatest compliments, and declared how difficult it would be for him to go on without him. The Duke of Grafton was alarmed to the utmost, from his affection for him, and Lord Hertford and I, seeing the factious and treacherous behaviour of his friends, and thinking it full as proper that he should govern them as they him, have done everything in our power to stop him; and I now at last flatter myself that he will not quit.

Well; still the places were vacant, and it was necessary to get recruits: a negotiation, begun at Bath, was renewed with the Duke of Bedford and his friends; and Lord Gower, the most impatient of that squadron to return to Court, was dispatched by Lord Chatham to Woburn, and returned the very next day, with full compliance on the Duke's part. Mr. Grenville in the mean time was not idle, but employed others of that faction to traverse it. The Duke would listen to no remonstrances, but arrived himself in two days, very moderate in his intended proposals. To his great surprise he learned that two, if not three, of the vacant posts had been disposed of in that short interval; Sir Edward Hawke being made First Lord of the Admiralty, and Sir Percy Brett another commissioner. The Grenvillians blew up this disappointment, and instead of modest demands, the Duke went to Lord Chatham with a list of friends, large enough to fill half the places under the Government. This was as flatly refused; the Duke went away in wrath—and is to be brought up again this week to vote against the Court. The consequence of all this is, the junction of Lord Chatham and Lord Bute, and the full support of the

Crown being given to the former. This has already appeared with much *éclat*, for on an ill-advised division on Friday last, Grenville and the Bedfords were but forty-eight, the Court one hundred and sixty-six—a great victory in such a dubious moment, and which I hope will fix the Administration. The minority may be increased possibly to-morrow by twenty more on the East Indian affair, if the Cavendishes and Yorkes carry to it all their little strength.

With all these “grumbles of a state-quake,” as Walpole put it to George Montague, “the session has ended very triumphantly for the great Earl.”¹ The King had given every encouragement to Chatham to resist what his Majesty described as the extravagant proposal of Bedford in these bootless negotiations :

GEORGE III. TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

ST. JAMES'S, [?] *m. past eleven, p.m.*

[*December 2, 1766.*]

Lord Chatham,

On my return from the ball-room, I found your letter containing the Duke of Bedford's extravagant proposal. Indeed I expected, from his choosing to deliver his answer in person, that he meant to attempt obtaining an office or two in addition to those offered ; but could not imagine that even the rapaciousness of his friends could presume to think of more than that.

I know the uprightness of my cause, and that my principal Ministers mean nothing but to aid in making my people happy ; therefore I cannot exceed the bounds you acquainted Lord Gower were the utmost that would be granted. This hour demands a due firmness ; 't is that has already dismayed all the hopes of those just retired, and will, I am confident, show the Bedfords of what little consequence they also are. A contrary conduct would

¹ *Chatham Correspondence*, Vol. III., p. 144.

at once overturn the very end proposed at the formation of the present administration ; for to rout out the present method of parties banding together, can only be obtained by a withstanding their unjust demands, as well as the engaging able men, be their private connexions where they will.

George III. had reason to rejoice in the double discomfiture of Bedford and Grenville in the reconstruction of the Cabinet and in the debates in Parliament, where, thanks to the King's subservient friends, the Administration could rely on substantial majorities. Grenville, Bedford, Rockingham, Temple and their followers were voting at this time for the East India Company against the claims of the Crown to the immense additions recently made to the territories over which the Company exercised a virtual sovereignty. The King's letter to Conway on the subject discloses his confidence in his strength, as well as his personal ill-will towards Grenville. " I would sooner meet Grenville at the point of the sword," he is reported to have declared to Lord Hertford, " than let him into my closet " ¹ :

GEORGE III. TO GENERAL CONWAY.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

December 6, 1766, 45 min. past 7 a.m.

Lieutenant General Conway.

The debate of yesterday has ended very advantageously for Administration ; the division on the motion for adjournment will undoubtedly show Mr. Grenville that he is not of the consequence he figures to himself. I am so sanguine with regard to the affair of the East India Company, that I trust Tuesday will convince the world, that whilst Administration has no object but the pursuing what may be of solid advantage to my people, that it is not in the power of any men to prevent it ; indeed, my great reliance on its success in the House of Commons, is on your ability and character, and I am certain I

¹ *Rockingham Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 50.

can rely on your zeal, at all times, to carry on my affairs, as I have no one desire but what tends to the happiness of my people.

GEORGE R.

The formidable Indian problem was temporarily settled in the following year in a parliamentary measure by which the title of the Crown was tacitly acknowledged by a lease to the Company of the new territories at an annual rental of £400,000. Turning from East to West, the Government was still faced with the more dangerous problem of the American colonists. News was now being received of the manner in which certain of the provinces were resenting the provisions of the amended Mutiny Bill, and of the rankling effect of the Declaratory Act. Some shrewd reflections on the situation were made in a letter from "Single-speech Hamilton" :

WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON TO JOHN CALCRAFT.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

February, 1767.

. . . As to America, I wish we may not burn our fingers, and do our enemies' work for them, by quarrelling among ourselves. There are, in the different provinces, about a million of people, of which we may suppose at least 200,000 men able to bear arms; and not only able to bear arms, but having arms in their possession, unrestrained by any iniquitous Game Act. In the Massachusetts government particularly, there is an express law, by which every man is obliged to have a musket, a pound of powder, and a pound of bullets always by him: so there is nothing wanting but knapsacks (or old stockings, which will do as well) to equip an army for marching, and nothing more than a Sartorius or a Spartacus at their head requisite to beat your troops and your custom-house officers out of the country, and set your laws at defiance. There is no saying what their leader may put them upon; but if they are active, clever people, and love mischief as well as I do peace and quiet, they will furnish matter of con-

sideration to the wisest among you, and perhaps dictate their own terms at last, as the Roman people formerly in their famous secession upon the sacred mount. For my own part, I think you have no right to tax them, and that every measure built upon this supposed right stands upon a rotten foundation, and must consequently tumble down, perhaps, upon the heads of the workmen.

New York, however, was the chief cause of anxiety at this period. Here the Assembly, after following up its belated and incomplete obedience to the Mutiny Act by means of various abortive protests, resolved no longer to comply with its demands. Petitions were sent home to the effect that the principle involved was not different from the Stamp Act, and infringed the constitutional rights of the colonists. This disobedience alarmed even their best friends in the Mother Country. "The devil has possessed the minds of the North Americans," wrote William Beckford to Chatham in the month of February. "George Grenville and his Stamp Act raised the foul fiend; a prudent firmness will lay him, I hope, for ever."¹ Chatham grew pessimistic:

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE
EARL OF SHELburne.

(*Private.*)

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

BATH, February 3, 1767.

My dear Lord,

. . . America affords a gloomy prospect. A spirit of infatuation has taken possession of New York: their disobedience to the Mutiny Act will *justly* create a great ferment here, open a fair field to the arraigners of America, and leave no room to any to say a word in their defence. I foresee confusion will ensue. The petition of the merchants of New York is highly improper: in point of time, most absurd; in the extent of their pretensions, most excessive; and in the reasoning, most grossly fallacious and offensive. What demon of discord blows the coals in that devoted province I know not; but

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 203.

they are doing the work of their worst enemies themselves. The torrent of indignation in Parliament will, I apprehend, become irresistible, and they will draw upon their heads national resentment by their ingratitude, and ruin, I fear upon the whole State, by the consequences. But I will not run before the event, as it is possible your lordship may receive an account more favourable. . . .

Shelburne's reply shows that the Ministry realised the danger of the situation :

THE EARL OF SHELburnE TO THE
EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HILL STREET,

Friday night, past 11. [*February 6, 1767.*]

My Lord,

Since I had the honour of your lordship's letter by Lambe, the inclosed advices have been received from America. The merchants here unanimously disavow the New York petition, and say that a Mr. Kelly has been the demon who has kindled this fire, and who is the sole author of it. Their letters, however, confirm Sir Henry Moore's account of the disposition of the people in regard to the Mutiny Act, and explain it to be owing to their jealousy of being some time or other taxed internally by the Parliament of Great Britain. The same reasoning has prevailed, your lordship sees, in New Jersey : in Massachusetts Bay there has been no question as to troops, but they have sent over a Bill, in which they have joined the indemnification of the sufferers to the general indemnity in consequence of the riots ; a circumstance Mr. Grenville thinks requires the notice of the House of Commons ; where it is said he means to take it up personally against Mr. Conway, on account of an expression in his letter of "forget and forgive." The Act asserting the right of Parliament has certainly spread a most unfortunate jealousy and diffidence of government here throughout America, and makes them jealous

of the least distinction between this country and that, lest the same principle may be extended to taxing them. The Mutiny Act was likewise framed in a hurry, at the end of a session, first framed by Colonel Robertson, the Quarter-Master-General in America, and then accommodated to the minds of the merchants here. It was enacted only for two years, and expires this March. I have therefore written to Lord Barrington to request him to give it, in every respect, the fullest consideration, in order to see him afterwards and know his sentiments as to what regards the war department.

As to that which regards the existence of government, after a great deal of painful consideration on so disagreeable a subject, I have nothing to submit to your lordship, except what I took the liberty to say to the King this morning ; namely, that I hoped both he and Parliament would distinguish between *New York* and *America*. But all that I have to say on this head is so much better expressed in a letter from Mr. Delaney,¹ the author of the American pamphlet to which your lordship did so much honour last session, than in any words of my own, that I beg to refer you to that, and enclose it with the other papers, with that view. . . .

Parliament, as Chatham foresaw, took so grave a view of New York's disobedience that it suspended the Assembly of the colony until it chose to comply with the terms of the Mutiny Act. New York had evidently forgotten to count the cost when it threw down the gauntlet to the English Parliament on this occasion, and, not being unanimous in its views, submitted. It was in this ill-fated hour, when, as Shelburne wrote to Chatham on February 16, "the public conviction goes so strongly to believing the dependence of the colonies at stake,"² that Charles Townshend chose to introduce his Revenue Act, which was to reopen all the old

¹ General Oliver Delaney. The pamphlet was entitled "Considerations on the Propriety of imposing Taxes on the British Colonies."

² Chatham Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 209.



Emery Walker, photographer

CHARLES TOWNSHEND, 1725-1767

From a mezzotint by J. Dixon after a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

wounds, and intensify the irritation beyond endurance. Townshend, owing to Chatham's increasing illness, did much as he liked as Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to colonial taxation. Walpole described him as a man of incomparable parts in some respects, and most entertaining to a spectator, but a perpetual source of danger as a politician; yet could not help admiring him in spite of his manifest faults. Not many months later he wrote to Mann of "a wonderful speech made by Charles Townshend last Friday *apropos* to nothing, and yet about everything—about Ministries past, present, and to come; himself in particular, whom I think rather past than to come. It was all wit and folly, satire and indiscretion—he was half drunk when he made it; and yet that did but serve to raise the idea of his abilities. I am sorry I have not time to be more particular, it would have diverted you. Nothing else is talked of, or at least was not when I began my letter."¹

With a Chancellor of the Exchequer who had supported Grenville and the stamp tax and an Administration without a guiding hand, pulling in various directions, it was small wonder that the Government's difficulties increased considerably. Pitt's illness, whatever it was, kept him so close a prisoner that his Ministerial colleagues were unable to see him.

Our political world [wrote Chesterfield in one of his letters] is in a situation that I never saw in my whole life. Lord Chatham has been so ill these two months that he has not been able (some say not willing) to do or hear of any business; and as for his *sous-ministres*, they either cannot, or dare not, do any, without his directions; so that everything is now at a stand.

The world, not unnaturally perhaps, believed his head disordered, as Walpole wrote to Mann on April 5:

and there is so far a kind of colour for this rumour, that he has lately taken Dr. Addington, a physician in vogue, who originally was a mad doctor.² The truth I believe is, that Addington, who is a kind of empiric, has forbidden his doing the least business, though he lies out of town, and everybody sees him pass in his coach along the streets. His case, I should think, is a symptomatic fever, that ought to turn to gout; but Addington keeps him so low that the gout cannot make its effort. Lord Chatham's friends are much alarmed, and so they say is Addington himself; yet, what is strange,

¹ Walpole's Letters.

² Father of Henry Addington, first Viscount Sidmouth.

he calls in no other help. This delays all business, which had all been too long delayed. America, whence the accounts are unpleasing, is yet to come on the carpet, so, notwithstanding the expedience of putting an end to the session, one knows not when it will be concluded.¹

The leaders of the Opposition now made the most of their opportunities, succeeding in reducing the Government majority nearly to vanishing point on several occasions. Once, indeed, in combining forces, they even turned it into a minority by a vote of 206 to 188 in the Commons in favour of compelling the Government to reduce the land tax at once from four shillings to three, instead of waiting, as Townshend proposed, until the following year. George III. fearing the collapse of an Administration which, in spite of its drawbacks, continued to pave the way for his personal supremacy, urged Chatham to see his second in command and put new heart into him, though the Earl had but two days previously begged to be excused when Grafton himself had entreated an interview :

GEORGE III. TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

RICHMOND LODGE, May 30, 1767,

34 m. past 2, p.m.

Lord Chatham,

No one has more cautiously avoided writing to you than myself, during your late indisposition ; but the moment is so extremely critical, that I cannot possibly delay it any longer. By the letter you received yesterday from the Duke of Grafton, you must perceive the anxiety he and the President at present labour under. The Chancellor is very much in the same situation. This is equally owing to the majority in the House of Lords, amounting on the Friday only to six, and on the Tuesday to three, though I made two of my brothers vote on both those days ; and to the great coldness shown those three Ministers by Lord Shelburne, whom they, as well as myself, imagine to be rather a secret enemy ; the avowed enmity of Mr. Townshend ;

¹ Walpole's Letters.

and the resolution of Lieutenant-General Conway to retire, though without any view of entering into faction.

My firmness is not dismayed by these unpleasant appearances ; for, from the hour you entered into office, I have uniformly relied on your firmness to act in defiance to that hydra faction, which has never appeared to the height it now does, till within these few weeks. Though your relations, [Temple and Grenville,] the Bedfords, and the Rockinghams are joined with intention to storm my closet, yet, if I was mean enough to submit, they own they would not join in forming an administration ; therefore nothing but confusion could be obtained.

I am strongly of opinion with the answer you sent the Duke of Grafton ; but, by a note I have received from him, I fear I cannot keep him above a day, unless you would see him and give him encouragement. Your duty and affection for my person, your own honour, call on you to make an effort : five minutes' conversation with you would raise his spirits, for his heart is good ; mine, I thank Heaven, want no rousing : my love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction. Be firm, and you will find me amply ready to take as active a part as the hour seems to require. Though none of my Ministers stand by me, I cannot truckle.

I wish a few lines in answer, as I am to have the Duke of Grafton with me this evening ; and if you cannot come to me to-morrow, I am ready to call at North-end on my return that evening to this place. Whilst I have sixty-five present and thirty proxies in the House of Lords ready to stand by me, besides a majority of 151 since that, in the House of Commons, against 84, though the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were in the minority, I think the game easy, if you either come out or will admit very few people.

GEORGE R.

Chatham's reply was the letter of a man suffering from the stress and strain of labours which had covered his country with glory, and entitled to well-earned rest. Though not yet sixty, and with twelve years of life still before him, he was obviously no longer fit for the wear and tear of politics :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO GEORGE III.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

NORTH END, May 30, 1767.

Sir,

Penetrated and overwhelmed with your Majesty's letter and the boundless extent of your royal goodness, totally incapable as illness renders me, I obey your Majesty's commands, and shall beg to see the Duke of Grafton to-morrow morning, though hopeless that I can add weight to your Majesty's gracious wishes. Illness and affliction deprive me of the power of adding more, than to implore your Majesty to look with indulgence on this imperfect tribute of duty and devotion.

I am, with the most profound respect, Sir, your Majesty's

Most dutiful and devoted servant,

CHATHAM.

The interview with Grafton was understood to be the alternative to a personal audience with the King himself, and it was the measure of the Minister's influence that his promise alone acted like magic upon his distracted lieutenant :

Though I was certain [wrote George III. on receiving his reply] no indisposition could abate your dutiful attachment to my person or your natural intrepidity to withstand the greatest enemy of this poor country—faction, I already look on all difficulties as overcome ; for the Duke of Grafton, who came to me just after I had received it, on my acquainting him you would see him to-morrow, required no other encouragement to continue in his present situation. He instantly, with that warmth of heart he is most thoroughly possessed of, said his

duty towards me could never be lessened, nor his reliance on you ; that a short conversation with you would, he was certain, remove any anxiety the want of your advice might have caused.¹

In the end—after fruitless negotiations with Bedford, Rockingham and others, with a view to reconstructing the Ministry—Grafton and Conway both agreed to remain in office, for the time being at all events, and weather the storm as well as they could in the hope that some time or other Chatham would be well enough to go to their rescue. Unhappily this hope was never realised. A pathetic picture of his condition was sent at this time to Grenville :

THOMAS WHATELY ² TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

July 29, 1767.

Dear Sir,

. . . I hear authentically that Lord Chatham's state of health is this :—He sits most part of the day leaning his head down upon his hands, which are

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 264.

² Thomas Whately, according to W. J. Smith, who edited the Grenville Correspondence, was a profound politician, as well as an industrious and intelligent purveyor of news. Having been Secretary of the Treasury during Grenville's Administration, he had familiar access to some of the principal men, and was undoubtedly much trusted by them. Junius was very severe upon him because soon after Grenville's death he went over to the Ministerials. All who left the Grenville connexion sooner or later felt the lash of Junius. "To be corrupted by such a *maquereau* as Whately," he wrote, "would turn the appetite of Moll Flanders. This poor man, with the talents of an attorney, sets up for an ambassador, and with the agility of Colonel Bodens, undertakes to be a courier. Indeed, Tom, you have betrayed yourself too soon ! Mr. Grenville, your friend, your patron, your benefactor, who raised you from a depth, compared to which even Bradshaw's family stands on an eminence, was hardly cold in his grave, when you solicited the office of go-between to Lord North. You could not, in my eyes, be more contemptible, though you were convicted (as I dare say you might be) of having constantly betrayed him in his lifetime. Since I know your employment, be assured I shall watch you attentively. Every journey you undertake, every message you carry, shall be immediately laid before the public. The event of your ingenious management will be this ; that Lord North, finding you cannot serve him, will give you nothing. From the other party, you have just as much detestation to expect as can be united with the profoundest contempt. Tom Whately, take care of yourself."

rested on the table. Lady Chatham does not continue generally in the room ; if he wants anything, he knocks with his stick ; he says little even to her if she comes in ; and is so averse to speaking, that he commonly intimates his desire to be left alone, by some signal rather than by any expression. The physicians, however, say there is nothing in his disorder which he may not recover, but do not pretend to say there is any prospect of its being soon. . . .

Parliament having risen, and Rockingham having declined the overtures to strengthen the Administration, on the ground that he was not allowed a sufficiently free hand in the new appointments, he received the following letter from Burke, which offers a lucid summing up of the situation from their point of view. Burke had by this time established his reputation in the Commons as an orator of the rarest gifts, and, as Grafton wrote to Chatham in the previous October, " the readiest man upon all points perhaps in the whole House." ¹ Further tribute was paid in the following month by General Lee in a letter to the Prince Royal of Poland. " An Irishman, Mr. Burke," he wrote, " is sprung up in the House of Commons, who has astonished everybody with the power of his eloquence, and his comprehensive knowledge in all our exterior and internal politics, and commercial interests. He wants nothing but that sort of dignity annexed to rank and property in England, to make him the most considerable man in the Lower House." ²

EDMUND BURKE TO THE MARQUESS
OF ROCKINGHAM.

[*Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*]

PARSON'S GREEN, August 1, 1767.

My dear Lord,

I hope you have by this time got over a little of your Yorkshire bustle, after escaping so much to your credit from the bustle of Westminster. Your lordship's conduct has certainly been very honourable to yourself, and very pleasing to your friends.

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 110.

² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

If we may judge from appearances, the consequences which have attended it are not very displeasing to your enemies. His Majesty never was in better spirits. He has got a Ministry weak and dependent ; and, what is better, willing to continue so. They all think they have very handsomely discharged any engagements of honour they might have had to your lordship ; and, to say the truth, seem not very miserable at being rid of you. They are certainly determined to hold with the present garrison, and to make the best agreement they can amongst themselves ; for this purpose they are negotiating something with Charles Townshend. Lord Bute is seldom a day out of town : I cannot find whether he confers directly and personally with the Ministry, but am told he does.

Meantime the American colonists had taken alarm at Townshend's Revenue Act, which, passed by Parliament, as already stated, in June, was planned to take effect in November. This imposed a tax on tea, glass, paper, red and white lead, and painters' colours, and though the receipts were not estimated to exceed £40,000—to be used in payment of the American governors, judges and other colonial officials—the Bill, with the accompanying laws for establishing commissioners of the customs in the colonies, roused bitter resentment in minds already inflamed by the menace of the Declaratory Act. Massachusetts in particular, which had hitherto succeeded in resisting every attempt on the part of the mother Parliament to bring colonial officials under its direct financial control, and regarded the Revenue Bill as proof of a determination to continue the oppressive system represented by the Stamp Act, at once took the lead in organising united action among the colonies in resisting this fresh attack upon their liberties. The evil that Townshend did in this respect lived after him, for he died at the beginning of September, two months before his Revenue Act came into force

Charles Townshend is dead [wrote Walpole to Mann on hearing the news in Paris]. All those parts

and fire are extinguished; those volatile salts are evaporated; that first eloquence of the world is dumb; that duplicity is fixed, that cowardice terminated heroically. He joked on death as naturally as he used to do on the living, and not with the affectation of philosophers, who wind up their works with sayings which they hope to have remembered. With a robust person he had always a menacing constitution. He had had a fever the whole summer, recovered as it was thought, relapsed, was neglected, and it turned to an incurable putrid fever.¹

Townshend was succeeded by Lord North, eldest son of the Earl of Guildford, who, after vowing he would never accept the post, accepted. He was soon to prove his fitness to carry on the fatal policy begun by Grenville, and continued by Townshend. It was North who, when Bedford urged that the nation should return "to its old good nature and its good old humour," retorted: "There has been no proof of any real return of friendship on the part of the Americans; they will give no credit for affection. . . . I am against repealing the last Act of Parliament, securing to us a revenue out of America. I will never think of repealing it, until I see America prostrate at my feet." The Ministry had been encouraged by the submission of New York into the belief that a firm hand was all that was necessary to secure the complete predominance of Parliament, and was unprepared for the stubborn Opposition which it now had to face—an Opposition all the more dangerous because its leaders, many of whom knew the law by heart, understood to a nicety how to defy the Government without incurring responsibility for any breach of the peace.

John Dickinson's "Letters from a Farmer" stated the case against the Revenue Acts with masterly force, and not only made a great stir among the colonists when first published in Pennsylvania, but were reissued by Franklin in London and, in a French translation, in Paris, where a keen, revengeful eye was being kept on the increasing difficulties in America of the traditional enemy. In December the

¹ Walpole's Letters.

Massachusetts Assembly laid their grievances before the King and his Ministers in petitions setting forth their claims in simple, dignified language, carefully chosen to avoid giving unnecessary offence. A circular letter was also addressed to the governing bodies of the sister colonies urging them to take concerted action in safeguarding their common interests. Other letters were written to influential friends of the colonists at home, including Lord Chatham, who, alas! was now incapable of championing their cause :

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MASSACHUSETTS
BAY, TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Prior Documents.*]

PROVINCE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY,

February 2, 1768.

My Lord,

The particular attention you were pleased to give to the interests of the American subjects when their rights were in danger, and your noble and successful efforts in support of them, have left in the breasts of all, the indelible marks of gratitude. The House of Representatives of this his Majesty's province, having reason to be assured, that in every instance of your public conduct, you are influenced by the principles of virtue and a disinterested public affection, beg leave to manifest to your lordship, a testimony of their full confidence in you, by imploring your repeated aid and patronage at this time when the cloud again gathers thick over them.

It must afford the utmost satisfaction to the distressed colonists, to find your lordship so explicitly declaring your sentiments in that grand principle in nature, "that what a man hath honestly acquired is absolutely and uncontrollably his own." This principle is established as a fundamental rule in the British Constitution, which eminently hath its foundation in the laws of nature; and consequently it is the indisputable right of all men, more especially of a British subject, to be present in person, or by representation, in the body where he is taxed.

But however fixed your lordship and some others

may be in this cardinal point, it is truly mortifying to many of his Majesty's free and loyal subjects, that even in the British Parliament, that sanctuary of liberty and justice, a different sentiment seems of late to have prevailed.

Unwilling to intrude upon your attention to the great affairs of state, the House would only refer your lordship to an Act passed in the fourth year of the present reign, and another in the last session of Parliament ; both imposing duties on the Americans who were not represented, with the sole and express purpose of raising a revenue. What, my Lord, have the colonists done to forfeit the character and privilege of subjects, and to be reduced in effect to a tributary state ? This House may appeal to the nation, that the utmost aid of the people has been cheerfully given when his Majesty required it : often, on their own motion, and when almost ready to succumb under the expense of defending their own borders, their zeal has carried them abroad for the honour of their Sovereign, and the defence of his rights : of this, my Lord, not to mention any more, the reduction of Louisburg in the year 1745, and the defence of his Majesty's garrison at Annapolis, and of all Nova Scotia, will be standing monuments. Can there then be a necessity for so great a change, and in its nature so delicate and important, that instead of having the honour of his Majesty's requisitions laid before their representatives here, as has been invariably the usage, the Parliament should now tax them without their consent ?

The enemies of the colonists, for such they unfortunately have, may have represented them to his Majesty's Ministers, and the Parliament, as factious, undutiful, disloyal : they, my Lord, are equally the enemies of Britain : such is your extensive knowledge of mankind, and the sentiments and disposition of the colonies in general, that this House would freely venture to rest the character of their constituents in your lordship's judgment : surely it is no ill dis-

position in the loyal subjects of a patriot King, with a decency and firmness adapted to their character, to assert their freedom.

The colonies, as this House humbly conceives, cannot be represented in the British Parliament : their local circumstances, at the distance of a thousand leagues beyond the seas, forbid, and will for ever render it impracticable : this, they apprehend, was the reason that his Majesty's royal predecessors saw fit to erect subordinate legislative bodies in America as perfectly free as the nature of things would admit, that their remote subjects might enjoy that inestimable right, a representation. Such a legislature is constituted by the royal charter of this province. In this charter, the King, for himself, his heirs and successors, grants to the inhabitants all the lands and territories therein described, in free and common socage ; as ample estate as the subjects can hold under the Crown ; together with all the rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities of his natural subjects born within the realm ; of which the most essential is a power invested in the General Assembly to levy proportionable and reasonable taxes on the estates and persons of the inhabitants, for the service of his Majesty, and the necessary defence and support of his government of the province, and the protection and preservation of the inhabitants. But though they were originally, and always, since their settlement, have been considered as subjects remote, they have cherished a warm affection for the mother state, and a regard for the interest and happiness of their fellow subjects in Britain. If then the colonies are charged with the most distant thought of an independency, your lordship may be assured that, with respect to the people of this province, and it is presumed, of all the colonies, the charge is unjust.

Nothing would have prevailed upon the House to have given your lordship this trouble, but the necessity of a powerful advocate, when their liberty

is in danger : such they have more than once found you to be ; and as they humbly hope they have never forfeited your patronage, they entreat that your great interest in the national councils may still be employed in their behalf, that they may be restored to the standing of free subjects.

That your lordship may enjoy a firm state of health, and long be continued a great blessing to the nation and her colonies, is the ardent wish of this House.

Signed by the Speaker.

Chatham's health was now so broken that it was deemed irrecoverable, and he advised Grafton to strengthen the Government by incorporating the Bedford party, thus weakening the Opposition. Bedford, disgusted with the tactics of Rockingham and Grenville, was nothing loath, and though declining office for himself, gave his followers their freedom of action. The Opposition, indeed, was completely at loggerheads at this period. "The Rockinghams," declared Walpole to Mann, "who have no reason to be angry with anybody but themselves, which nobody likes to be, do not know with whom to be most angry. George Grenville is distracted that the Ministers will not make America rebel, that he may be Minister and cut America's throat, or have his own throat cut ; and everybody else, I suppose, will get places as soon as they can." ¹ In the fresh shuffling of the pack which followed, General Conway resigned as Secretary of State in favour of Lord Weymouth, retaining, however, his Cabinet rank ; Lord Northington was succeeded as President of the Council by Lord Gower ; and Lord Hillsborough was created Secretary of State for America—a new office detached from Lord Shelburne's department, to that statesman's extreme displeasure. It was an evil day when American affairs were thus taken from one who favoured conciliatory measures, and handed over to a pompous politician whose views on the subject were best expressed when he declared that "we can grant nothing to the Americans except what they may ask with a halter round their necks." Such acquisi-

¹ Walpole's Letters.

tions to the Ministry served but to strengthen the King's hands, though Walpole, disgusted with the turn of events, doubted their ability to stay longer than their predecessors had done ;

Though the Court will take them [he wrote to Mann on December 14], I shrewdly suspect that they do not intend to keep them long. For my part, I am perfectly indifferent whether they do or not, as my resolution was taken, when I declined coming into Parliament again, to have nothing more to do with politics for the rest of my life ; and I am not apt to break my resolutions. I cannot, like the Duke of Newcastle, sail through life with generation after generation ; and I am sick of the present. I have seen them in all shapes, and know them thoroughly ; and unless I receive new provocations from any set, I prefer none to the other. In truth, I do not know whether the Bedfords are not the best, as they have not shame enough to be hypocrites.¹

The views held in England by such men as Hillsborough and Grenville, as well as by the King himself, were abundantly supported by what seemed to them the best of all evidence—the testimony of many of the governors and minor officials, native-born Americans in some cases, and as honest in their conservative convictions as the more ardent Sons of Liberty. There was no more uncompromising Tory and King's Friend in England than was Francis Bernard, then Governor of Massachusetts, with Thomas Hutchinson as his lieutenant-governor. Bernard, like Hutchinson, had not welcomed the Stamp Act, but the fact that it was an Act of Parliament made it sacred in his eyes, and as such to be accepted with becoming submission by all his Majesty's subjects. The colonists' conduct honestly shocked him, and when Hillsborough came into office he was only too willing to support him in his measures of repression. Of all the letters home from colonial governors and others at this period, however, none did so much harm as those written by

¹ Walpole's Letters.

Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson and his brother-in-law Oliver—the former stamp distributor who had been hanged in effigy alongside Bute from the Boston Liberty Tree—to Thomas Whately, Grenville's old secretary at the Treasury. The harm was done not so much by the nature of their contents as by the use to which these letters were subsequently put by Franklin and the colonists, as, in due course, will be seen. They are now, as far as possible, reprinted in their chronological order from the collection as published in London in 1774, with the reports of the proceedings on the subject in the Massachusetts Assembly and the Houses of Parliament at home. One of them, from which we take the following extracts, was written by Oliver to Whately from Boston as far back as May 7, 1767 :

We have some here who have been so busy in fomenting the late disturbances, that they may now think it needful for their own security to keep up the spirit. They have plumed themselves much upon the victory they have gained, and the support they have since met with ; nor could anything better show what they would still be at, than the manner in which, by their own account published in the newspapers last August, they celebrated the 14th of that month, as the first anniversary commemoration of what they had done at the tree of Liberty on that day the year before. . . .

You have doubtless seen some of the curious messages from the late House to the Governor, and can't but have observed with how little decency they have attacked both the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor. They have also in effect forced the Council to declare themselves parties in the quarrel they had against the latter in a matter of mere indifference. In their message to the Governor of the 21st of January, they have explicitly charged the Lieutenant-Governor (a gentleman to whom they are more indebted than to any one man in the Government) with "ambition and lust of power," merely for paying a compliment to the

Governor agreeable to ancient usage, by attending him to court, and being present in the council-chamber when he made his speech at the opening of the session ; at which time they go on to say, " none but the general court and their servants are intended to be present," still holding out to the people the servants of the Crown as objects of insignificance, ranking the Secretary with their door-keeper, as servants of the Assembly ; for the Secretary with his clerks and the door-keeper are the only persons present with the Assembly on these occasions.

The officers of the Crown being thus lessened in the eyes of the people, takes off their weight and influence, and the balance will of course turn in favour of the people, and what makes them still more insignificant is their dependence on the people for a necessary support. . . .

The Crown did by Charter reserve to itself the appointment of a Governor, Lieutenant-Governor and Secretary : the design of this was without doubt to maintain some kind of balance between the powers of the Crown and of the people ; but, if officers are not in some measure independent of the people (for it is difficult to serve two masters) they will sometimes have a hard struggle between duty to the Crown and a regard to self, which must be a very disagreeable situation to them, as well as a weakening to the authority of government. The officers of the Crown are very few, and are therefore the more easily provided for without burdening the people : and such provision I look upon as necessary to the restoration and support of the King's authority.

. . . I have wrote with freedom, in confidence of my name's not being used on the occasion. For though I have wrote nothing but what in my conscience I think an American may upon just principles advance, and what a servant of the Crown ought upon all proper occasions to suggest, yet the many prejudices I have to combat with, may render it unfit it should be made public.

The next letter, from the same correspondent, picks up the thread of our narrative in the spring of 1768, when the colonists proceeded to retaliate by every means in their power. Massachusetts took the leading part in denouncing the revenue laws, making the lives of the Commissioners of Customs a burden to them, and calling upon the other colonies to follow suit :

ANDREW OLIVER TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

BOSTON, May 11, 1768.

Sir,

. . . You lay me, Sir, under the greatest obligations, as well for the interesting account of public affairs, which you are from time to time pleased to transmit me, as for your steady attention to my private concerns. I shall always have the most grateful sense of Mr. Grenville's intentions of favour also, whether I ever reap any benefit from them or not. Without a proper support afforded to the King's officers, the respect due to Government will of course fail ; yet I cannot say whether under the present circumstances, and considering the temper the people are now in, an additional provision for me would be of real benefit to me personally or not. It has been given out that no person who receives a stipend from the Government at home, shall live in the country. Government here wants some effectual support. No sooner was it known, that the Lieutenant-Governor had a provision of £200 a year made for him out of the revenue, than he was advised in the *Boston Gazette* to resign all pretensions to a seat in council, either with or without a voice. The temper of the people may be surely learnt from that infamous paper ; it is the very thing that forms their temper ; for if they are not in the temper of the writer at the time of the publication, yet it is looked upon as the ORACLE, and they soon bring their temper to it. Some of the latest of them are very expressive ; I will not trouble you with sending them, as I imagine

they somehow or other find their way to you : But I cannot but apprehend from these papers and from hints that are thrown out, that if the petition of the House to his Majesty, and their letters to divers noble Lords, should fail of success, some people will be mad enough to go to extremities. The commissioners of the customs have already been openly affronted, the Governor's company of Cadets have come to a resolution not to wait on him (as usual) on the day of General Election, the 25th instant, if those gentlemen are of the company. And the town of Boston have passed a Vote that Faneuil Hall (in which the Governor and his company usually dine on that day) shall not be opened to him, if the Commissioners are invited to dine with him. A list of Counsellors has within a few days past been printed and dispersed by way of sneer on Lord Shelburne's letter, made up of King's officers ; which list, the writer says, if adopted at the next general election, may take away all grounds of complaint, and may possibly prove a healing and a very salutary measure. The Lieutenant-Governor is at the head of this list ; they have done me the honour to put me next ; the Commissioners of the Customs are all in the list except Mr. Temple, and to complete the list, they have added some of the waiters. I never thought, 'till very lately, that they acted upon any settled plan, nor do I now think they have 'till of late ; a few, a very few, among us have planned the present measures, and the Government has been too weak to subdue their turbulent spirits. Our situation is not rightly known ; but it is a matter worthy of the most serious attention.

I am, with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

ANDREW OLIVER.

Matters reached a climax in June, when the King's authority was openly defied by an attack made on the luckless Commissioners as a sequel to the seizure of the sloop *Liberty* by the *Romney* warship. The *Liberty* was shrewdly

suspected of landing a cargo of Madeira wine without paying anything like the full duty, and after its seizure was anchored close to the man-of-war in order to prevent an attempt at rescue. In revenge, the mob during the evening hauled ashore the pleasure-boat belonging to Collector Harrison and burned it. During the riots Harrison himself had been injured by a brick, and, with his son, narrowly escaped with his life :

THOMAS HUTCHINSON TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

BOSTON, June 18, 1768.

Sir,

As you allow me the honour of your correspondence, I may not omit acquainting you with so remarkable an event as the withdrawal of the Commissioners of the Customs, and most of the other Officers under them, from the town on board the *Romney*, with an intent to remove from thence to the Castle.

In the evening of the 10th, a sloop belonging to Mr. Hancock, a Representative for Boston, and a wealthy merchant of great influence over the populace, was seized by the collector and comptroller for a very notorious breach of the acts of trade, and, after seizure, taken into custody by the officer of the *Romney* man of war, and removed under command of her guns. It is pretended that the removal, and not the seizure, incensed the people. It seems not very material which it was. A mob was immediately raised, the officers insulted, bruised, and much hurt, and the windows of some of their houses broke ; a boat belonging to the collector burnt in triumph, and many threats uttered against the Commissioners and their officers : no notice being taken of their extravagance in the time of it, nor any endeavours by any authority, except the governor, the next day, to discover and punish the offenders ; and there being a rumour of a higher mob intended Monday (the 13th) in the evening, the Commissioners, four of them, thought themselves altogether unsafe, being desti-

tute of protection, and removed with their families to the *Romney*, and there remain and hold their board, and next week intend to do the same, and also open the Custom-house at the Castle. The Governor pressed the council to assist him with their advice, but they declined and evaded, calling it a brush, or small disturbance by boys and negroes, not considering how much it must be resented in England that the officers of the Crown should think themselves obliged to quit the place of their residence, and go on board a King's ship for safety, and all the internal authority of the province take no notice of it. The town of Boston have had repeated meetings, and by their votes declared the Commissioners and their officers a great grievance, and yesterday instructed their Representatives to endeavour that inquiry should be made by the Assembly, whether any person by writing, or in any other way, had encouraged the sending troops here—there being some alarming reports that troops are expected—but have not taken any measures to discountenance the promoters of the late proceedings; but, on the contrary, appointed one or more of the actors or abettors on a committee appointed to wait on the Governor, and to desire him to order the man of war out of the harbour.

Ignorant as they be, yet the heads of a Boston town-meeting influence all public measures.

It is not possible this anarchy should last always. Mr. Hallowell, who will be the bearer of this, tells me he has the honour of being personally known to you. I beg leave to refer you to him for a more full account.

I am, with great esteem, Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

THO. HUTCHINSON.

Two days later the head of the Customs Commissioners sent his letter from the *Romney* pointing out the urgent necessity, in his opinion, of two or three regiments to prevent open rebellion :

CHARLES PAXTON TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

June 20, 1768.

Dear Sir,

The Commissioners of the Customs have met with every insult since their arrival at Boston, and at last have been obliged to seek protection on board his Majesty's ship *Romney*. Mr. Hallowell, the Comptroller of the Customs, who will have the honour to deliver you this letter, will inform you of many particulars; he is sent by the Board with their letters to government. Unless we have immediately two or three regiments, 't is the opinion of all the friends to government, that Boston will be in open rebellion.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and warmest regard,

Dear Sir,

Your most faithful and obliged servant,

CHARLES PAXTON.

On board his Majesty's Ship *Romney*, Boston Harbour.

Commodore Hood, afterwards Admiral Lord Hood, sent Grenville himself an account of the *Liberty* riots. These were followed, as he says, by the dissolution of the Massachusetts Assembly as a result of its refusal, by a majority of 92 to 17, to rescind its circular letter of the preceding year to its sister colonies in opposition to the new revenue laws. It was this circular letter which the new American Secretary, Lord Hillsborough, described as "a flagitious attempt to disturb the public peace":

COMMODORE HOOD TO MR. GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

HALIFAX, July 11, 1768.

Sir,

What has been so often foretold is now come to pass. The good people of Boston seem ready and ripe for open revolt, and nothing, it is imagined, can

prevent it but immediate armed force. I do myself the honour to give you, Sir, a little detail how matters have gone, and how far the force entrusted to my care has been employed in the support of the Commissioners of the Revenue, on the applications they have made to me.

On the 24th of March I received a letter from the Commissioners, setting forth, that from the conduct and temper of the people, and adverse aspect of things in general, the security of the revenue, the safety of its officers, and the honour of Government, required immediate aid, and hoping I should find it consistent with the King's other services, to afford them such assistance. I ordered the *Romney* of 50 guns to be fitted with all possible dispatch, and as soon as the season would give leave she sailed for Boston, accompanied by two armed schooners. The commanders were strictly directed to be aiding and assisting to the Commissioners to the utmost of their power, in the due and legal execution of the laws of trade and navigation, according to the true intent and meaning of the said laws, and the several Acts of Parliament made in that behalf.

On the appearance of the *Romney* before the town, the riot and disorder seemed to subside, but on a vessel's being seized for illicit trade, belonging to a Mr. Hancock (by far the richest man in the province, and the known abettor of tumultuous proceedings), by the Comptroller (who went for England about a fortnight past), a numerous and violent mob assembled, and the Collector and Comptroller, with other officers, were beaten and wounded, the Collector's boat burnt, and other acts of a most outrageous nature committed. The lives of the Commissioners were threatened, and they were happy in taking shelter by stratagem on board the *Romney*, where they tarried some days, and then landed at Castle William. They then wrote to me for more aid, and I immediately sent two more ships,

which has secured the Castle from all attempts of surprising it.

On the 21st past, Governor Bernard, by command of his Majesty, acquainted the Assembly that it was required to rescind the resolves of last year.¹ This has been refused, with the most scurrilous abuse of all his Majesty's servants in England as well as those in America, and even the person and office of the King was not spared by some of the demagogues.

The Governor gave the Assembly a longer time to reconsider the matter, which still refused, and it was dissolved on the 2nd instant, as you will see by his Excellency's proclamation in the newspaper I now send, which contains the several messages between

¹ "Two days," wrote William Knox to Grenville on May 24, "since I had a conversation with Lord Hillsborough, which his lordship seemed willing I should communicate, and as I imagine you will be pleased to hear something is doing, I take the liberty of setting down the substance of what he told me. The resolutions of the Assembly at Massachusetts, his lordship said, had been proposed at the beginning of the Session, and then rejected by a great majority, which was the foundation for saying the American subjects were returning to their duty; but when many of the county members were gone home, the same resolutions were again moved and agreed to. So soon as this transaction came to Lord Hillsborough's knowledge, his lordship writ to Governor Bernard to call the Assemblies together, and require them in the King's name to rescind the resolutions of the last Session, and, if they refuse so to do, then to dissolve them instantly, and when their Charter requires a new Assembly to be called, he is to make the same demand, and, upon refusal, dissolve them likewise, and in no case to suffer an Assembly to sit or to do business until they shall comply with this demand. His lordship has also written to the Governors of the other colonies, acquainting them that a certain seditious letter is said to have been written by the Assembly of Massachusetts to the several Assemblies on the Continent, which letter the King hopes and expects their respective Assemblies will treat with great contempt and indignation, and if they do so his Majesty thanks them. But should the Governors perceive an inclination in their Assemblies to adopt the measures of the Massachusetts Bay Assembly, they are to dissolve those Assemblies and, by repeated dissolutions, frustrate such combinations. The civil expense in the several colonies which by this proceeding may be left unprovided for, is to be defrayed out of the American revenue, and the Governors are directed to draw on the Treasury for it. I think this message will bring matters to a crisis very speedily, and if the colonies see this country is in earnest, they will presently make their option, and take the part of peaceable subjects in future."—*Grenville Correspondence*.

the Governor and Assembly previous to the dissolution.

On the 5th instant, orders were received here to prepare temporary coverings for the six companies of the 50th regiment, on the islands of Cape Breton and St. John, and the four of the 29th at the other outposts of this province. Upon information of these orders from Colonel Dalrymple, I ordered the equipment of the *Launceston* to be hastened as much as possible, and she is now ready for service ; and as I had a letter yesterday from General Gage, requesting my assistance for transporting troops, and Colonel Dalrymple having orders to repair to Boston with those now here, if a requisition should be made by Governor Bernard before a junction of the whole can be effected, I hold the *Launceston* in constant readiness to take troops on board. I have sent an officer with my letters to the Admiralty, and I could not let him depart without being the bearer of a letter to you. I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,
SAM HOOD.

Hutchinson's next letter is not more unreasonable in its denunciations than might have been expected from one who had himself suffered from the indiscriminate violence of his brother colonists :

THOMAS HUTCHINSON TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

BOSTON, August, 1768.

Sir,

It is very necessary other information should be had in England of the present state of the Commissioners of the Customs than what common fame will bring to you, or what you will receive from most of the letters which go from hence, people in general being prejudiced by many false reports and misrepresentations concerning them. Seven-eighths of the people of the country suppose the Board itself to be unconstitutional, and cannot be undeceived and brought to believe that a Board has existed in Eng-

land all this century, and that the Board established here has no new powers given to it. Our incendiaries know it, but they industriously and very wickedly publish the contrary. As much pains have been taken to prejudice the country against the persons of the Commissioners, and their characters have been misrepresented and cruelly treated, especially since their confinement at the Castle, where they are not so likely to hear what is said of them, and are not so able to confute it, . . . I own I was in pain for them. I do not believe if the mob had seized them, there was any authority able and willing to have rescued them. After they had withdrawn, the town signified to the Governor by a message that it was expected or desired they should not return. It was then the general voice that it would not be safe for them to return. After all this, the sons of liberty say they deserted or abdicated.

The other officers of the Customs in general either did not leave the town, or soon returned to it. Some of them seem to be discontented with the Commissioners. Great pains have been taken to increase the discontent. Their office by these means is rendered extremely burdensome. Everything they do is found fault with, and yet no particular illegality or even irregularity mentioned. There is too much hauteur, some of their officers say, in the treatment they receive. They say they treat their officers as the Commissioners treat their officers in England, and require no greater deference. After all, it is not the persons, but the office of the Commissioners which has raised this spirit, and the distinction made between the Commissioners is because it has been given out that four of them were in favour of the new establishment, and the fifth was not. If Mr. Hallowell arrived safe, he can inform you many circumstances relative to this distinction, which I very willingly excuse myself from mentioning.

I know of no burden brought upon the fair trader by the new establishment. The illicit trader finds

the risk greater than it used to be, especially in the port where the Board is constantly held. Another circumstance which increases the prejudice is this—the new duties happened to take place just about the time the Commissioners arrived. People have absurdly connected the duties and Board of Commissioners, and suppose we should have had no additional duties, if there had been no Board to have the charge of collecting them. With all the aid you can give to the officers of the Crown, they will have enough to do to maintain the authority of Government, and to carry the laws into execution. If they are discountenanced, neglected, or fail of support from you, they must submit to everything the present opposers of government think fit to require of them. . . .

I am, with very great esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THO. HUTCHINSON.

August 10. Yesterday at a meeting of the merchants, it was agreed by all present to give no more orders for goods from England, nor receive any on commission until the late Acts are repealed. And it is said all except sixteen in the town have subscribed an engagement to that tenor. I hope the subscription will be printed, that I may transmit it to you.

Commodore Hood was all for force, and certain, as he assured Grenville, that had the two regiments held in readiness to embark from Halifax at a moment's notice been despatched to Boston six months previously, none of the other colonies would have dared to follow suit :

COMMODORE HOOD TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

HALIFAX, August 8, 1768.

Sir,

I did myself the honour to address to you a short detail of the situation of affairs at Boston on

the 11th past, by an officer I charged with dispatches to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty ; since which the aspect of things is not in the least mended—indeed the ferment amongst the people seems at times to be smothered, but then diligent search is ever making by the demagogues after fuel to kindle the flame afresh.

Mr. Williams, the Inspector-General of the Customs, who was from home in the late riots, had his house beset on the evening of his return by a vast mob, who, in a tumultuous manner, insisted on seeing Mr. Williams, and his appearing at the window. It was demanded that he should immediately go to Liberty Tree, there resign his office, and take an oath never to resume it, which he refused, assuring them, at the same time, that he had friends in the house ready to defend him if his doors were forced. They then insisted he should go to the Castle to the Commissioners, where they have been prisoners at large many weeks, which he also refused, when much clamour ensued, and much vengeance was threatened ; but on assurance being given by Mr. Williams that he would meet them at the Town House next day at noon, they dispersed without doing much mischief. At the appointed hour Mr. Williams went through a mob of many thousands, who opened a passage for him, and, from a window, he repeatedly told them of their proceedings last evening, that he was come agreeable to his promise, and demanded what they had to say to him : not a word of reply was made by any one ; *all* were silent. His resolute behaviour had quite disconcerted them ; but he has often since received anonymous letters threatening his life unless he resigns his office.

Governor Bernard was very apprehensive that the Castle would be attacked, and wrote to Captain Corner of the *Romney*, requesting his assistance by all means in his power for the defence and protection of it. Thus things at present are : from the information I have received, all is confusion, and Govern-

ment without authority. In the latter end of last month, Mr. Bernard pressed his council to advise him to call for troops: the whole except three opposed the measure, so that his Excellency is now left to act upon his own judgment solely, which may possibly make him less timid.

Colonel Dalrymple, by General Gage's order, holds two regiments in constant readiness to embark from hence, whenever they are required by the Governor, or directed by the General. Had this force been landed in Boston six months ago, I am perfectly persuaded no address or remonstrance would have been sent from the other colonies, and that all would have been tolerably quiet and orderly at this time throughout America. Every day's delay of the only remedy that can prove effectual, has manifestly tended to an increase of bad humour, by which, what would have been without difficulty effected early in the spring, will become an arduous, and probably a fatal undertaking late in the year.

The giving to the Colonies such time and opportunity for uniting in opposition to the British Acts of Parliament, ought, in my humble opinion, by all possible means, to have been prevented. But I forget to whom I have the honour to address myself, and must entreat your goodness, Sir, to excuse my presumption in saying what I have in matters of such high importance, and to one who is so perfect a judge of them; I meant only to relate facts as they were transmitted to me. This goes by one of his Majesty's armed schooners, whose defects are too great to be repaired in this Yard, and, as soon as I determined on sending her to England, I made it known to Governor Bernard, who was happy in so favourable an opportunity for his dispatches, which were yesterday brought me from Boston.

Almost the whole trade of America is more or less illicit; three vessels have been this summer seized in the Gulph and River St. Lawrence, by his Majesty's cruisers under my command; and if Government is

determined to put a stop to it, a greater number of small armed schooners, upon such an establishment as the cutters are at home, must be employed, which I have taken the liberty to recommend to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and am perfectly persuaded they would give a vast annual increase to the King's revenues. Only four are at present within my district, and I am of opinion there ought to be a dozen at least.

Whately had written to Hutchinson just previously to this, describing the resentment aroused in England on the arrival of Comptroller Hallowell with details of the *Liberty* riots in June, in which he had been left bleeding on the ground and otherwise maltreated. Hutchinson admitted in reply that local affairs had been critical enough in Boston, but that he had no fear of a general revolt. Time and troops, he considered, would do all that was necessary :

THOMAS HUTCHINSON TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

BOSTON, October 4, 1768.

Dear Sir,

I was absent upon one of our circuits when Mr. Byles arrived. Since my return, I have received from him your obliging letter of 31st July. I never dared to think what the resentment of the nation would be upon Hallowell's arrival. It is not strange that measures should be immediately taken to reduce the colonies to their former state of government and order, but that the national funds should be affected by it is to me a little mysterious and surprising. Principles of government absurd enough spread through all the colonies ; but I cannot think that in any colony, people of any consideration have ever been so mad as to think of a revolt. Many of the common people have been in a frenzy, and talked of dying in defence of their liberties, and have spoke and printed what is highly criminal, and too many of rank above the vulgar, and some in public posts, have countenanced and encouraged them, until they

increased so much in their numbers, and in their opinion of their importance, as to submit to Government no further than they thought proper. The legislative powers have been influenced by them, and the executive powers entirely lost their force. There has been continual danger of mobs and insurrections, but they would have spent all their force within ourselves ; the officers of the Crown, and some of the few friends who dared to stand by them, possibly might have been knocked on the head, and some such fatal event would probably have brought the people to their senses. For four or five weeks past the distemper has been growing, and I confess I have not been without some apprehensions for myself, but my friends have had more for me ; and I have had repeated and frequent notices from them from different quarters, one of the last I will enclose to you.¹

In this state of things, there was no security but quitting my post, which nothing but the last extremity would justify. As Chief Justice, for two years after our first disorders, I kept the grand juries tolerably well to their duty. The last spring, there had been several riots, and a most infamous libel

¹ The enclosure was a letter to Hutchinson from his friend, Judge Auchmuty, dated September 4, 1768, to the following effect : " The great esteem I have for you in every point of light, perhaps renders my fears and doubts for the safety of your person greater than they ought to be ; however, if that is an error, it certainly results from true friendship, naturally jealous. Last night I was informed by a gentleman of my acquaintance, who had his information from one intimate with, and knowing the infernal purposes of the Sons of Liberty, as they falsely style themselves, that he verily believed, from the terrible threats and menaces by those Catilines against you, that your life is greatly in danger. This informant, I know, is under obligations to you, and is a man of veracity. He expressed himself with concern for you, and the gentleman acquainting me with this horrid circumstance, assured me he was very uneasy till you had notice. I should have done myself the honour of waiting on you, but am necessarily prevented. The duty I owed to you as a friend, and to the public as a member of society, would not suffer me to rest till I had put your Honour upon your guard ; for though this may be a false alarm, nothing would have given me greater pain, if any accident had happened, and I had been silent. If possible, I will see you to-morrow, and let you know further into this black affair. And am, with the sincerest friendship and respect, your Honour's most obedient, and most humble servant, ROB. AUCHMUTY."

had been published in one of the papers, which I enlarged upon, and the grand jury had determined to make presentments, but the Attorney-General not attending them the first day, Otis and his creatures, who were alarmed and frightened, exerted themselves the next day, and prevailed upon so many of the jury to change their voices, that there was not a sufficient number left to find a bill. They have been ever since more enraged against me than ever. At the desire of the Governor I committed to writing the charge while it lay in my memory, and as I have no further use for it, I will enclose it, as it may give you some idea of our judicatories.

Whilst we were in this state, news came of two regiments being ordered from Halifax, and soon after two more from Ireland. The minds of people were more and more agitated, broad hints were given that the troops should never land, a barrel of tar was placed upon the beacon, in the night to be fired, to bring in the country when the troops appeared, and all the authority of the Government was not strong enough to remove it. The town of Boston met and passed a number of weak, but very criminal votes; and as the Governor declined calling an Assembly, they sent circular letters to all the towns and districts to send a person each that there might be a general consultation at so extraordinary a crisis. They met and spent a week, made themselves ridiculous, and then dissolved themselves, after a message or two to the Governor, which he refused to receive; a petition to the King, which I dare say their agent will never be allowed to present, and a result which they have published ill-natured and impotent.

In this confusion the troops from Halifax arrived. I never was much afraid of the people's taking arms, but I was apprehensive of violence from the mob, it being their last chance before the troops could land. As the prospect of revenge became more certain, their courage abated in proportion. Two

regiments are landed, but a new grievance is now raised. The troops are by Act of Parliament to be quartered nowhere else but in the barracks, until they are full. There are barracks enough at the Castle to hold both regiments. It is therefore against the Act to bring any of them into the town. This was started by the Council in their answer to the Governor, which, to make themselves popular, they in an unprecedented way published and have alarmed all the province ; for although none but the most contracted minds could put such a construction upon the Act, yet after this declaration of the Council nine-tenths of the people suppose it just. I wish the Act had been better expressed, but it is absurd to suppose the Parliament intended to take from the King the direction of his forces, by confining them to a place where any of the colonies might think fit to build barracks. It is, besides, ungrateful, for it is known to many that this provision was brought into the Bill after it had been framed without it, from mere favour to the colonies. I hear the Commander-in-Chief has provided barracks or quarters, but a doubt still remains with some of the Council, whether they are to furnish the articles required, unless the men are in the province barracks, and they are to determine upon it to-day. The Government has been so long in the hands of the populace that it must come out of them by degrees ; at least it will be a work of time to bring the people back to just notions of the nature of Government.

The troops referred to by Hutchinson were the two regiments ordered to Boston by Lord Hillsborough as a result of alarming despatches from Governor Bernard and the prayer of the threatened Commissioners for protection. After weeks of dogged resistance the Town Council scored over the authorities by its strict interpretation of the Act of Parliament, the Commander at length hiring quarters, instead of forcing the troops on the inhabitants, as was originally intended. Hutchinson despised both the town meeting and

the unauthorised convention of delegates from the whole of the province. This last was called by the Boston select men when Bernard, in reply to a deputation comprising John and Sam Adams, Otis, and Hancock, refused to summon a special meeting of the Legislature in order to deal with the crisis involved by the coming of the troops. Neither Hutchinson nor any one else of his loyalist views realised how many of the "common people" meant every word they said when they talked of dying in defence of their liberties, or how surely these townsmen of Boston were building up, by means of the very meetings and conventions scorned in the foregoing letter, a system of government which, with infinite craft and daring, was slowly but surely reducing the authority of the Crown to impotence and ridicule.

At home the real gravity of the situation in America was only fully realised by those most in favour of conciliation. In the letter which follows the Lord Chancellor reveals the divided councils of the Cabinet on this subject, as well as his own consistent policy of justice and moderation :

LORD CAMDEN TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

[*Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton.*]

BATH, October 4, 1768.

. . . I was a long time in hopes that Massachusetts Bay would have been the only disobedient colony : it would have been no difficult measure to have dealt with them, if the others had sit still, and remained passive : but I am deceived in that expectation : for it is now manifest that the whole continent will unite and make it a common cause. We are shifted, by I know not what fatality, upon Mr. Grenville's ground ; and being pressed on the one hand by the Declaratory Law, and on the other by the colony's resolute denial of Parliamentary authority, that the issue is now joined upon the right, which in my apprehension, is the most untoward ground of dispute that could have been started : fatal to Great Britain, if she miscarries : unprofitable if she succeeds. For it is (as I believe your Grace thinks with me, it is) inexpedient to tax the colonies, as

we maintained when the Stamp Act was repealed. After both sides are half ruined in the contest, we shall at last establish a right, which ought never to be exerted.

If the Americans are able to practise so much self-denial as to subsist only for one twelve-month without British commodities, I do very much fear that they will carry their point, without striking a blow. Patience and perseverance in this one measure will ruin us. And I am more apt to dread this event, because it seems to me that the colonies are more sober, and consequently more determined in their present opposition, than they were upon the Stamp Act. For, except only the riots at Boston, I see nothing like active rebellion in the other provinces. If it should happen, the merchants and manufacturers here at home will be clamorous ; and half our own people will be added to the American party.

Your Grace will ask upon this representation of things ; What is to be done ? Indeed, my dear Lord, I do not know what is best to advise.

The Parliament, I presume, while the Declaratory Law stands will not endure an avowal of the American principle ; consequently cannot repeal the Act in question : because that would admit the American principle to be right, and their own doctrine erroneous. Therefore, I conclude the Parliament will not repeal ; consequently must execute the law : and this of course must be the language of the Speech.

The method, how to execute it, is the next consideration : and here I am much at a loss. There is no pretence for violence anywhere but at Boston : that is the ringleading province ; and if any country is to be chastised, the punishment ought to be levelled there. I have been sometimes thinking, that if the Act was repealed in favour of the other provinces, excepting Massachusetts Bay, and there executed with proper rigour, that such a measure might not be unsuccessful : but I am aware that no man

perhaps but myself could be brought to relish such a measure of concession ; as almost everybody else holds the Declaratory Law to be a sacred fundamental, never to be departed from.

I submit to the Declaratory Law, and have thought it my duty upon that ground, as a Minister, to exert every constitutional power to carry the Duty Act into execution. But, as a member of the Legislature, I cannot bring myself to advise violent measures to support a plan so inexpedient and so impolitic. And I am very much afraid (I speak this confidentially to your Grace) that if a motion should be made to repeal the Act, I should be under a necessity to vote for it. But there are so few in my way of thinking that such a motion is not to be expected. I am very sensible that a difference of opinion on a subject so serious and important may be prejudicial to the Administration ; and I lament the occasion, being persuaded that a most perfect union amongst us is essential, and I will labour to effect it with my best endeavours : but I do fear most exceedingly that upon the American question the Bedfords and myself will be too far asunder to meet. I must maintain my own ground : the public knows my opinion, and knows theirs. Neither of us can be inconsistent with ourselves.

This letter is to your Grace only. You are my Pole Star, Lord Chatham being eclipsed. I had rather see your Grace at the head of Government, than any other man in this kingdom, and therefore, I have disclosed to you my whole heart upon this ill-fated business ; though I am sensible that my sentiments do not altogether coincide with your Grace's opinion. There is nothing I dread so much as a war with America. I shall be very happy to know your councils in town upon this subject.

Rockingham maintained the policy which he had pursued when he accompanied the repeal of the Stamp Act by introducing the Declaratory Act. " However times may vary,

and warm and ill-founded ideas and doctrines may arise on either side the Atlantic," he wrote to the Speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly before its dissolution in the preceding year in response to a vote of thanks in that House—for "the part I had taken for securing and cultivating the union of this country with its colonies"—"I shall always consider that this country, as the parent, ought to be tender and just; and that the colonies, as the children, ought to be dutiful. A system of arbitrary rule over the colonies I would not adopt on this side; neither would I do otherwise than strenuously resist when attempts were made to throw off that dependency to which the colonies ought to submit, not only for the advantage of this country, but for their own real happiness and safety."¹ In the dangerous situation which had since developed, Rockingham was as angry with the extremists of Boston as with those at home, as he told Collector Harrison, of the Boston Customs, who had written complaining bitterly of the treatment he had received at the hands of infuriated townsmen, and begging that he might be allowed to return home:

THE MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM TO
COLLECTOR HARRISON.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

October 2, 1768.

. . . I own I feel just as angry at the dangerous madness of some in America, as at the passion and obstinacy of some at home, and my only reliance is, that there are still at home those who will adhere to their avowed maxims of justness and mildness towards the colonies,—and that in the colonies there are still as many, who will co-operate with them by checking a conduct in the colonies which has every now and then broke out in the most dangerous and offensive manner.

The Declaratory Bill which *we* brought in to fix and ascertain the rights of this country over its colonies, is what I must and shall ever adhere to. The exerting of that *right* is a matter which ought to

¹ Grenville Correspondence.

be well considered, and the ability of the colonies ought to be the first postulatam ground to go upon. There is no entering into the arguments *pro* and *con* on this subject without making my letter much too long, and especially to you who already know my sentiments on that matter. If the affairs in America go on with warmth, I have no doubt but that the restrictions of the Act of Navigation will be considered as a virtual taxation—I am sure so far I should agree with them, that they have the same tendency as a tax, and I always use it as an argument to those, who often assert that the colonies pay nothing to the support of the Mother Country. If I tie my tenants to grind at the manor mill, I certainly raise money upon them *virtually*, for I let my mill the better for their being tied to be its customers.

Grenville, as he assured ex-Governor Pownall—Bernard's predecessor at Massachusetts Bay—remained convinced that all would have been well but for the encouragement of the friends of liberty at home :

I have done my duty [he wrote] by asserting the sovereignty of the King and Parliament of Great Britain over all the dominions belonging to the Crown, and to make all the subjects of the kingdom contribute to the public burthens for their own defence, according to their abilities and situation. I thought that we had the clearest right imaginable, and that we were bound, by every tie of justice and of wisdom, to do this ; and I am convinced it would have been accomplished, without any considerable difficulty, if America had not received such encouragement to oppose it from *hence*, as no other people would have resisted. To this the present confusion is entirely owing, nor will it now cease if we shall run into the contrary extreme of violence on the other side. Nothing but a plan of wisdom, justice, moderation, and firmness can now extinguish the flame which has so weakly and so wickedly been raised both

within and without the kingdom. For my own part I shall wait the event with concern, and shall be ready to give any assistance I can whenever I see any practicable road opened to our safety.¹

Grenville's old secretary at the Treasury kept him posted with news and gossip which merely tended to confirm him in his views :

THOMAS WHATELY TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

October 11, 1768.

Dear Sir,

I agree with you entirely in believing that the Ministry have no plan settled for America. Lord Hillsborough is greatly elated, I hear, at Philadelphia and Rhode Island having refused to join with Boston in the agreement not to import goods from England ; it was natural they should refuse, because now they will supply Boston. New York therefore has, I understand, also refused ; but we are in a miserable plight when we rejoice only that things are not worse, and if we triumph in such an advantage, we shall be content in the end with very slight advantages. It was thought a symptom of the ruin of the Spartan State that the people exulted in the retreat of the enemy from their gates ; they before had not an idea that an enemy could set foot on the most distant part of their territories. We are humbled indeed if we are pleased to hear that some of the Americans will condescend to trade with us. The question of sovereignty is not at all decided by it ; on that point Philadelphia, Rhode Island, and New York still agree with Boston ; but before their dissent was known, the agreement had very little effect in the city. Lord North tells me there will be no petition from the merchants, and at the same time assures me that no pains has been taken by Ministry to prevent one ; from whence his inference was, that

¹ Grenville Correspondence.

pains had been taken by the former Ministry to procure the petitions which led to the repeal of the Stamp Act.

A heavy blow to the policy of conciliation was dealt by the resignation on October 12 of the Earl of Chatham, "my extremely weak and broken state of health continuing to render me entirely useless to the King's service," as he wrote in begging Grafton on that day to lay him at his Majesty's feet with "his humblest request that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to grant me his royal permission to resign the privy seal."¹ At the same time Chatham made a grievance of the dismissal of Sir Jeffrey Amherst from his sinecure post as Governor of Virginia, the Government's intention being to send over a resident governor instead, as well as the approaching removal of Shelburne, who had offended Grafton by his disloyalty on repeated occasions. Shelburne was also obnoxious alike to the King and the Bedford recruits by persistently urging a policy of colonial conciliation on the Government, though the colonies had been separated from his department. George III. at first declined to accept Chatham's resignation :

GEORGE III. TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

QUEEN'S HOUSE, October 14, 1768.

Lord Chatham,

The Duke of Grafton communicated to me yesterday your desire of resigning the privy seal, on account of the continuation of your ill state of health. As you entered upon that employment in August 1766, at my own requisition, I think I have a right *to insist* on your remaining in my service ; for I with pleasure look forward to the time of your recovery, when I may have your assistance in resisting the torrent of Factions this country so much labours under. This thought is the more frequent in my mind, as the Lord Chancellor and the Duke of Grafton take every opportunity to declare warmly

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. III., p. 338.



Emery Walker, photographer

WILLIAM PITT, FIRST EARL OF CHATHAM

From the portrait after Richard Brompton in the National Portrait Gallery

to me their desire of seeing that : therefore I again repeat it, you must not think of retiring, but of pursuing what may be most conducive to restore your health, and to my seeing you take a public share in my affairs.

GEORGE R.

Chatham, however, was determined to resign the seal, and the King was unable to insist after receiving this indisputable appeal :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO GEORGE III.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HAYES, Friday, October 14, 1768.

Sir,

Penetrated with the high honour of your Majesty's gracious commands, my affliction is infinite to be forced by absolute necessity from illness to lay myself again at your Majesty's feet for compassion. My health is so broken, that I feel all chance of recovery will be entirely precluded by my continuing longer to hold the privy seal, totally disabled as I still am, from assisting in your Majesty's councils. Under this load of unhappiness, I will not despair of your Majesty's pardon, while I supplicate again on my knees your Majesty's mercy, and most humbly implore your Majesty's royal permission to resign that high office. Should it please God to restore me to health, every moment of my life will be at your Majesty's devotion. In the mean time, the thought your Majesty deigns to express of my recovery is my best consolation.

I am, Sir,

with all submission and veneration,

Your Majesty's most dutiful, &c. &c. &c. &c.

CHATHAM.

Contemporary opinion of Pitt's resignation and the removal of Shelburne which followed it is shrewdly reflected in Walpole's next letter to Sir Horace Mann ;

HORACE WALPOLE TO HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

STRAWBERRY HILL,

October 24, 1768.

I have been confined these three weeks with the gout in both feet, and am still lying upon my couch ; yet I must oblige myself to write you a few lines, as the resignation of Lord Chatham will have excited your curiosity. In truth, I am little able to satisfy it, for besides having entirely bidden adieu to politics, I am here, ten miles from town, which is a thousand miles from truth. To the King, I am told Lord Chatham pleaded want of health, and despair of it : but to the Duke of Grafton he complained of the treatment of Sir Jeffrey Amherst, and the intended removal of Lord Shelburne—the last, an unwise measure of the last accession to the Administration. I do not see why want of health should have dictated this step more just now than at any moment for this last year. It being timed too at the eve of the Parliament has a suspicious look. As I have always doubted of the reality of his disorder, this proceeding does not abate my suspicion, yet there is in this conduct as in all his preceding, something unaccountable. No reconciliation seems to have taken place with his family ; he is as extravagantly profuse as ever, and I believe almost as much distressed. Lord Shelburne protested that he had not received the slightest intimation of Lord Chatham's intention, and yet has since resigned himself. The common report, for I really know nothing of the matter, is, that this nail started will not unpeg the Administration. Lord Rochford is Secretary of State, but Lord Weymouth goes into Lord Shelburne's province. Who is to be Privy Seal I do not know.¹

General Amherst's successor was Lord Botetourt, a Court favourite, bankrupt in fortune, who, on arriving in Virginia

¹ George William, second Earl of Bristol, became Privy Seal. Chatham had appointed him Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1766.

as resident governor, found the colonists as determined as were the Bostonians to adhere to the non-importation agreement, and so roused in their opposition to the Revenue Acts that he dissolved the Assembly in the following spring. He did not live through the humiliations of the revolutionary war, dying at his post in 1770. Meantime the seat of the revolt was Boston, where the arrival of the troops had certainly put an end to political lawlessness for the time, but had also served to dig the wound still deeper into liberty-loving breasts. Governor Bernard had succeeded in earning the thorough contempt of Commodore Hood, as well as the whole-hearted hatred of the colonists :

COMMODORE HOOD TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

HALIFAX, October 15, 1768.

. . . Affairs in America by no means wear a pleasant complexion, but I hope and fully trust that peace and good order will be restored in no long time. God be praised ! the troops are safe landed, and very critically too, as you will see by an extract of a letter sent to me, as well as by a short diary of Captain Corner's, from his sending away the *Senegal* with the requisition for troops 'till their arrival, by which you have the best accounts I can give how matters really are.

" I embrace the opportunity of the *Magdalen* to return you my most sincere thanks, and to congratulate you on the very important service you have been so instrumental in rendering to the public. On the intention of a force being introduced into the province being made public, a convention was formed, as I am told, in direct opposition to law : those that composed it, seemed to warrant the measure, and you will judge of their tempers by their publications. Agreements of mutual defence were entered into, as were also, it is strongly reported, some secret articles of an uncommon nature. At this period we arrived : the convention were planet-stricken, and this very favourable occasion I entreated

the Governor to improve. It is beyond the power of my pen to paint anything so abject ; far from being elated that the hands of Government were rendered so respectable, he deplored the arrival of letters that made his setting out improper, and with earnest looks he followed a ship that he had hired for his conveyance, and in which he declared his fixed intention of going the moment the troops arrived. His actions were entirely of a piece with his words, for, on a requisition for quarters, he declared himself without power or authority in his province. The Council assembled, and they declared they would find none. An express arriving from General Gage, gave me no room to hesitate ; his information of the dangerous tendency of the people's intentions rendered an immediate landing necessary. All their bravadoes ended as may be imagined ; the Governor prudentially retired to the country, and left me to take the whole on myself. I encamped the 29th Regiment immediately ; the 14th remained without cover : by tolerable management I got possession of Faneuil Hall, the School of Liberty, from the Sons thereof, without force, and thereby secured all their arms ; and I am much in fashion, visited by Otis, Hancock, Rowe, &c., who cry *peccavi*, and offer exertions for the public service, in hopes by this means to ruin the Governor, by exposing his want of spirit and zeal for the public advantage. This I have endeavoured, not without success, to turn to the use and advantage of the cause. We have had council after council, and nothing done ; the service of the Crown is not much attended to : I spoke my sentiments, full as plain as pleasant. What turn matters will take I know not, but thus far, my good Sir, you may rest satisfied, that the arrival of the squadron was the most seasonable thing ever known, and that I am in possession of the town, and therefore nothing can be apprehended. Had we not arrived so critically, the worst that could be apprehended must have happened. I have entreated Captain Smith, to continue

here in force 'till matters are a little settled. I want words to express our ideas of the very great friendship we received from all the gentlemen of the squadron; I shall not therefore attempt it."

Just as the *Magdalen* was about to sail the next day, the Colonel added the following note :

"We are, my dear Sir, in a fair way to do very well ; prejudices are giving way fast ; they neither think us cannibals nor street robbers. In justice to Captain Smith, I must acknowledge his constant readiness in affording us every possible assistance, as have every officer in the squadron. I entreat you will make us as powerful as possible during the winter ; much depends upon it."

As the *Romney* is not come to me agreeable to my expectations, I propose going to Boston in the *Viper* sloop, as soon as she is ready for sea. I was under the necessity of careening her, as she was twice ashore, but has received no damage. I inclined much to have gone with the troops, but all the ships were so crowded, there was not room for me without adding to the inconvenience of all the officers. I propose to remain at Boston during the winter, if I think the service of his Majesty can thereby be in the least promoted. By what I have related you will pretty plainly see how matters stand, and how little is to be expected from Governor Bernard. I have long and often lamented his timid conduct, and yet would not willingly bring on him more contempt than he must of course feel, when the duplicity of his behaviour is brought to light ; but I could not refrain giving you for your particular information my opinion of things in general. A Governor of spirit and dignity, and who preferred the honour of his King, and the interest of his country, to his own little views, would have prevented almost the whole that has happened ; and had Mr. Bernard taken courage to ask General Gage for the very troops now in Boston nine months ago, and which I have authority for believing openings were given him to do by

the General, things would now have worn a very different complexion, and the Commissioners never have been forced to leave the town, but have been in a condition to carry on their business in peace and quietness.

They were, as I am told, never properly supported by the Governor, and in no one instance did he ever have recourse to the civil magistrates for putting a stop to any riot or unlawful meeting ; and what is yet more extraordinary, he suffered a declaration to be extorted from him, that he had not applied for troops, and would not do it, which I am afraid led the lower class of people to greater lengths than they would otherways have gone, as well as the demagogues also.

Mr. Bernard is without doubt a sensible man, but he has a vast deal of low cunning, which he has played off upon all degrees of people, to his own disgrace. His doubles and turnings have been so many, that he has altogether lost his road, and brought himself into great contempt. I cannot help mentioning one circumstance which has come to my knowledge as an officer. He frequently lamented to Captain Corner (whom I sent to Boston early in May for the support of the King's revenue) the distressed condition of Castle William, and was afraid of its being attacked, [of] which Captain Corner (knowing his man) took no notice. At last he spoke out, and said if he did not send his marines to the Castle the populace would certainly take it. Captain Corner replied that he would not only send his marines, but every man in the *Romney* in support of the Castle, if his Excellency would request it of him in a proper manner in writing ; his orders from Commodore Hood enjoined him to it in the most express terms ; to which Mr. Bernard answered—" I cannot do that, Captain Corner, but I will tell you what you must do, you must write me a letter that the marines on board his Majesty's ship under your command stand in need of being refreshed, and desire my permission for their being landed on

Castle William Island, which I will grant." Captain Corner begged to be excused, and withdrew. In a few days after he wrote Captain Corner a proper letter, and ante-dated it. I think this proves the man very clearly. I had a letter from him, dated the 27th of August, desiring I would grant him a ship to carry him to England, having the King's leave to return. I was very sorry it was not in my power to comply with his request, for most certainly the sooner he is out of America the better.

Bernard was all for ruling with a rod of iron now that the troops were in possession of the town, for two Irish regiments, newly arrived from Cork, were landed in November. Hancock's sloop *Liberty* was condemned and attached to the revenue service, and before the end of the year the Governor was sending advice home to the effect that there would perhaps never again be "so fair an opportunity for the supreme power to reform the constitution of this subordinate government." On December 23, in a letter marked "Confidential," he proposed a clean sweep of those members of the Assembly who had been chiefly responsible for the insubordinate behaviour of the unauthorised Convention—Otis, the Moderator, Thomas Cushing, the Speaker, Sam Adams, John Hancock, Joseph Jackson, John Ruddock, John Rowe, Samuel Pemberton, and William Cooper—as well as the dismissal of the justices who had dared to refuse quarters to the troops on the ground of illegality.¹

It was in accord with the irony of things that Bernard chose Christmas Eve to enclose this letter, unsigned, in a note to Under-Secretary John Pownall, brother of the Governor whom he had succeeded, entreating great secrecy. Next comes the document which inspired the greatest wrath when Franklin, by means still unknown, came into possession of the private letters from Hutchinson and his colleagues among Whately's private correspondence—after Whately's death—and forwarded them to the Sons of Liberty in America :

¹ Frotheringham, *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1862.

THOMAS HUTCHINSON TO THOMAS WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

BOSTON, January 20, 1769.

Dear Sir,

You have laid me under very great obligations by the very clear and full account of proceedings in Parliament, which I received from you by Capt. Scott. You have also done much service to the people of the province. For a day or two after the ship arrived, the enemies of Government gave out that their friends in Parliament were increasing, and all things would be soon on the old footing ; in other words, that all acts imposing duties would be repealed, the Commissioners board dissolved, the customs put on the old footing, and *illicit* trade be carried on with little or no hazard. It was very fortunate that I had it in my power to prevent such a false representation from spreading through the province. I have been very cautious of using your name, but I have been very free in publishing abroad the substance of your letter, and declaring that I had my intelligence from the best authority, and have in a great measure defeated the ill design in raising and attempting to spread so groundless a report. What marks of resentment the Parliament will show, whether they will be upon the province in general, or particular persons, is extremely uncertain, but that they will be placed somewhere is most certain, and I add, because I think it ought to be so, that those who have been most steady in preserving the constitution and opposing the licentiousness of such as call themselves Sons of Liberty, will certainly meet with favour and encouragement.

This is most certainly a crisis. I really wish that there may not have been the least degree of severity beyond what is absolutely necessary to maintain, I think I may say to you, the dependence which a colony ought to have upon the parent state ; but if no measures shall have been taken to secure this dependence, or nothing more than some declaratory

acts or resolves, it is all over with us. The friends of government will be utterly disheartened, and the friends of anarchy will be afraid of nothing, be it ever so extravagant.

The last vessel from London had a quick passage. We expect to be in suspense for the three or four next weeks, and then to hear our fate. I never think of the measures necessary for the peace and good order of the colonies without pain. There must be an abridgment of what are called English liberties. I relieve myself by considering that in a remove from the state of nature to the most perfect state of government, there must be a great restraint of natural liberty. I doubt whether it is possible to project a system of government in which a colony 3000 miles distant from the parent state shall enjoy all the liberty of the parent state. I am certain I have never yet seen the projection. I wish the good of the colony when I wish to see some further restraint of liberty, rather than the connexion with the parent state should be broken ; for I am sure such a breach must prove the ruin of the colony. Pardon me this excursion ; it really proceeds from the state of mind into which our perplexed affairs often throws me.

I have the honour to be, with very great esteem,
Sir, your most humble and most obedient servant,
THO. HUTCHINSON.

When this fell into the hands of the colonists some four years later, the relations with the Mother Country were strained to breaking point, and it made no difference that Hutchinson's reference to what he considered the need for "some further restraint of liberty" was the private opinion of a loyalist in a confidential letter to a friend at home—a minor politician out of office at the time—and not more than he had dared openly to express in public. They regarded Hutchinson as a traitor to his country, as the leader of an insidious plot to deprive them of their liberties, and condemned him accordingly. Hutchinson's letters were injudicious in an age in which no man's correspondence was

safe in the post, and prove that he was too little in sympathy with the aspirations of his brother colonists to exercise any of the arts of compromise and diplomacy which mark the ideal administrator ; but, according to his lights, he was acting as much for the good of the colony as for the Mother Country, and believed, like Bernard in his Christmas Eve letter to the Under-Secretary, " the giving these men a check . . . would really be salutary to themselves, as well as advantageous to the Government." ¹

¹ Frotheringham, *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1862

CHAPTER VI

A KINGDOM DISTRACTED

Wilkes Redivivus—His Fruitless Appeals for Pardon—Returns to Defy the Authorities—An Unworthy Leader of a Great Cause—Elected by the People but Declined by Parliament—Walpole's Account of the Riots—George III. Demands Wilkes's Expulsion—The Outlaw's Trial—Riots End in Bloodshed—A Kingdom Distracted—Wilkes Imprisoned on his Old Convictions—His Fresh Offence from Prison—Re-elected by Middlesex—The Adventures of Dingley—Mob Law in London—The Court Member for Middlesex—The Constitutional Struggle Continued in America—Washington's Views—Virginian Assembly Dissolved—Boston's Controversial War—Samuel Adams openly Hints at Separation—Commodore Hood's Optimism—Revenue Taxes Repealed except on Tea—Hillsborough's Unwarrantable Letter—Increasing Tension in America—Chatham Champions the Constitutional Cause—Burke and the "Present Discontents"—Junius to Grafton and George III.

ENGLAND had other troubles at this time besides the burdens of empire. Not only was the foreign outlook again threatening, but all domestic affairs had been in a tumult throughout the year 1768 as a result of the unexpected return of the stormy petrel John Wilkes. If the King and his friends flattered themselves that they had crushed that notorious demagogue once and for all when they outlawed him in 1764 they found themselves grievously mistaken on his sudden reappearance in their midst four years later, carrying England by storm as the persecuted champion of liberty. Wilkes had tired of the Continent and the amorous intrigue which kept him a willing prisoner for a time in Paris, with a fairly comfortable income of £1,000 a year, provided by his friends among the Rockingham Whigs. He had twice ventured back to London, unknown to the people, in the vain hope of a pardon. The first visit was in May, 1766, shortly before the fall of the Rockingham Ministry, when he was forced to make a precipitate and disappointed retreat to Paris. The second visit was in November of the same year, in the early months of Chatham's *régime*, when he returned

in the hope that Grafton, as First Lord of the Treasury and second in command, would be able and willing to obtain the King's pardon for him :

Though I have been cut off from the body of his Majesty's subjects by a cruel and unjust proscription [he wrote to Grafton on his arrival in a letter of appeal which Pitt himself could scarcely have improved upon in its ardent expressions of loyalty to his king], I have never entertained an idea inconsistent with the duty of a good subject. My heart still retains all its former warmth for the dignity of England, and the glory of its Sovereign. I have not associated with the traitors to our liberties, nor made a single connexion with any man who was dangerous, or even suspected by the friends of the Protestant family on the throne. I now hope that the rigour of an unmerited exile is past, and that I may be allowed to continue in the land and among the friends of liberty. I wish, my Lord, to owe this to the mercy of my Prince. I entreat you to lay me with all humility at the King's feet, with the truest assurances that I have never in any moment of my life, swerv'd from the duty and allegiance I owe to my Sovereign, and that I implore and in everything submit to his Majesty's clemency. Your Grace's noble manner of thinking, and the obligations I have formerly receiv'd, which are still fresh in my mind, will I hope give a full propriety to this address, and I am sure a heart glowing with the sacred zeal of liberty must have a favourable reception from the Duke of Grafton. I flatter myself that my conduct will justify your Grace's interceding with a Prince who is distinguished by a compassionate tenderness to all his subjects.¹

Grafton showed the letter to the King, who, however, made no observation upon it, according to the First Lord's autobiography. Chatham's sage advice was to take no notice of the letter ; "and his advice," adds Grafton, "I followed." It would have saved the King and his Friends a vast deal of trouble if they had also taken less notice of

¹ Anson's "Duke of Grafton," pp. 192-3.

Wilkes when, two years later, he took the bull by the horns by declaring himself a candidate for the City of London in the approaching general election. If he could not come back with a pardon, he would return without one and defy the authorities to do their worst. He addressed the King himself in a letter of appeal, which, while it expressed his zeal and attachment to his Majesty's service, complained of the unscrupulous and revengeful conduct of his late Ministers. Needless to say, the King made no response. It is no part of our present purpose to follow the whole course of Wilkes's unruly fortunes, but a selection from the correspondence of Walpole—who was soon bored beyond words by the very name of Wilkes—and other contemporaries will serve to illustrate the seething state of discontent into which the country had fallen as a result of the arbitrary rule of the King and his Friends in a corrupt House of Commons. The struggle that Wilkes returned to lead was the counterpart of that which had a fairer chance of success in the colonies. Wilkes was neither a Sam Adams nor a George Washington in his private character to inspire such confidence as did those and other disinterested God-fearing men in all ranks among the Sons of Liberty across the Atlantic. Englishmen, too, were not fighting for their livelihood, as well as their political rights, like the American evaders of the revenue laws; and the City and Middlesex were within easier reach of the law. England has a long arm, as one of the colonists said at the time, but three thousand miles is a long way to stretch it. When Wilkes put up for the City he was late on the scene, but he polled 1,200 votes. Thereupon, supported by his generous patron Temple, the Whiggish Duke of Portland, and Horne Tooke, then Rector of Brentford, who pledged his credit for his expenses, he stood for Middlesex, which elected him with a large majority, amid scenes of excitement which Walpole may now be left to describe :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET,

Thursday, March 31, 1768.

. . . The spectre is the famous Wilkes. He appeared the moment the Parliament was dissolved.

The Ministry despise him. He stood for the City of London, and was the last on the poll of seven candidates, none but the mob, and most of them without votes, favouring him. He then offered himself to the County of Middlesex. The election came on last Monday. By five in the morning a very large body of Weavers, etc., took possession of Piccadilly, and the roads and turnpikes leading to Brentford, and would suffer nobody to pass without blue cockades, and papers inscribed "*No. 45, Wilkes and Liberty.*" They tore to pieces the coaches of Sir W. Beauchamp Proctor, and Mr. Cooke, the other candidates, though the latter was not there, but in bed with the gout and it was with difficulty that Sir William and Mr. Cooke's cousin got to Brentford. There, however, lest it should be declared a void election, Wilkes had the sense to keep everything quiet. But, about five, Wilkes, being considerably a-head of the other two, his mob returned to town and behaved outrageously. They stopped every carriage, scratched and spoilt several with writing all over them "*No. 45,*" pelted, threw dirt and stones, and forced everybody to huzza for Wilkes. I did but cross Piccadilly at eight, in my coach with a French Monsieur d'Angeul, whom I was carrying to Lady Hertford's; they stopped us, and bid us huzza. I desired him to let down the glass on his side, but, as he was not alert, they broke it to shatters. At night they insisted, in several streets, on houses being illuminated, and several Scotch refusing, had their windows broken. Another mob rose in the City, and Harley, the present Mayor, being another Sir William Walworth, and having acted formerly and now with great spirit against Wilkes, and the Mansion House not being illuminated, and he out of town, they broke every window, and tried to force their way into the House. The Trained Bands were sent for, but did not suffice. At last a party of guards, from the Tower, and some lights erected, dispersed the tumult. At one in the morning a riot began before Lord Bute's house, in

Audley Street, though illuminated. They flung two large flints into Lady Bute's chamber, who was in bed, and broke every window in the house. Next morning, Wilkes and Cooke were returned members. The day was very quiet, but at night they rose again, and obliged almost every house in town to be lighted up, even the Duke of Cumberland's and Princess Amelia's. About one o'clock they marched to the Duchess of Hamilton's in Argyle Buildings (Lord Lorn being in Scotland). She was obstinate, and would not illuminate, though with child, and, as they hope, of an heir to the family, and with the Duke, her son, and the rest of her children in the house. There is a small court and a parapet wall before the house : they brought iron crows, tore down the gates, pulled up the pavement, and battered the house for three hours. They could not find the key of the back door, nor send for any assistance. The night before, they had obliged the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland to give them beer, and appear at the windows, and drink "Wilkes' health." They stopped and opened the coach of Count Seilern, the Austrian Ambassador, who has made a formal complaint, on which the Council met on Wednesday night, and were going to issue a Proclamation, but, hearing that all was quiet, and that only a few houses were illuminated in Leicester Fields from the terror of the inhabitants, a few constables were sent with orders to extinguish the lights, and not the smallest disorder has happened since. In short, it has ended like other election riots, and with not a quarter of the mischief that has been done in some other towns.

There are, however, difficulties to come. Wilkes has notified that he intends to surrender himself to his outlawry, the beginning of next term, which comes on the 17th of this month. There is said to be a flaw in the proceedings, in which case his election will be good, though the King's Bench may fine or imprison him on his former sentence. In my own

opinion, the House of Commons is the place where he can do the least hurt, for he is a wretched speaker, and will sink to contempt, like Admiral Vernon, who I remember just such an illuminated hero, with two birthdays in one year. You will say, he can write better than Vernon—true: and therefore his case is more desperate. Besides, Vernon was rich: Wilkes is undone; and, though he has had great support, his patrons will be sick of maintaining him. He must either sink to poverty and a jail, or commit new excesses, for which he will get knocked on the head. The Scotch are his implacable enemies to a man. A Rienzi cannot stop: their histories are summed up in two words—a triumph and an assassination.

Wilkes had placed the Government in a ridiculous tangle. All the great lawyers of the land, as Walpole wrote in one of his later letters, were puzzled to know what to do with him.

I am persuaded [wrote Camden to Grafton on April 3] that no person living, after Wilkes had been defeated in London would have thought it possible for him to have carri'd his election for the County of Middlesex. . . . If the precedents and the Constitution will warrant an expulsion that perhaps may be right. A criminal flying his country to escape justice—a convict and an outlaw—that such a person should in open daylight thrust himself upon the country as a candidate, his crime unexpiated, is audacious beyond description. This is the light in which I consider the affair, the riot only inflaming the business, for that does no more show the weakness of Government than any other election riot in the kingdom.¹

“How,” however, as the Lord Chancellor afterwards admitted, “can the House expel a member, either as an

¹ Anson's “Duke of Grafton,” pp. 199–200.

outlaw or a convict, while the suit is pending, wherein he may turn out at last to be neither the one nor the other ? ” ¹ George III. was not troubled by any of these legal scruples, and made it clear to his Ministers that the expulsion of Wilkes “ must be effected ” :

GEORGE III. TO LORD NORTH.

[*Correspondence of George III. with Lord North.*]

QUEEN'S HOUSE, April 25, 1768.

Lord North,

Though entirely confiding in your attachment to my person, as well as in your hatred of every lawless proceeding, yet I think it highly proper to apprize you that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be very essential, and must be effected ; and that I make no doubt, when you lay this affair with your usual precision before the meeting of the gentlemen of the House of Commons this evening, it will meet with the required unanimity and vigour. The case of Mr. Ward,² in the reign of my great-grandfather, seems to point out the best method of proceeding on this occasion, as it will equally answer whether the Court should by that time have given sentence, or should he be attempting to obtain a writ of error. If there is any man capable of forgetting his criminal writings, I think his speech in the Court of King's Bench, on Wednesday last, reason enough for to go as far as possible to expel him ; for he declared “ Number 45 ” a paper that the author ought to *glory in*, and the blasphemous poem³ a mere *ludicrous production*. But I will detain you no longer on this subject, and desire you will send me word, when the meeting is over, the result of what has passed, and also how soon you mean to dispatch a messenger with an account of it to the Duke of Grafton, as I will by the same person send a letter to him.

GEORGE R.

¹ Anson's “ Duke of Grafton,” p. 200.

² John Ward, of Hackney, who was convicted of forgery and expelled the House in May, 1728.

³ The “ Essay on Woman ” (see p. 80).

Every stage of the involved proceedings against Wilkes after he surrendered to his outlawry, true to his word, on April 27, was marked by such riots as are again best described in Walpole's letters :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET,

Thursday, May 12, 1768.

. . . Wilkes, on the 27th of last month, was committed to the King's Bench. The mob would not suffer him to be carried thither, but took off the horses of his hackney-coach and drew him through the City to Cornhill. He there persuaded them to disperse, and then stole to the prison and surrendered himself. Last Saturday his cause was to be heard, but his Counsel pleading against the validity of the outlawry, Lord Mansfield took time to consider, and adjourned the hearing till the beginning of next term, which is in June.

The day before yesterday the Parliament met. There have been constant crowds and mobbing at the prison, but, on Tuesday, they insisted on taking Wilkes out of prison and carrying him to Parliament. The tumult increased so fast, that the Riot Act was read, the soldiers fired, and a young man was shot. The mob bore the body about the streets to excite more rage, and at night it went so far that four or five more persons were killed ; and the uproar quashed, though they fired on the soldiers from the windows of houses. The partisans of Wilkes say the young man was running away, was pursued and killed ; and the jury have brought it in wilful murder against the officer and men : so they must take their trials ; and it makes their case very hard, and lays the Government under great difficulties. On the other side, the young man is said to have been very riotous, and marked as such by the Guards. But this is not all. We have independent mobs, that have nothing to do with Wilkes, and who only take advan-

tage of so favourable a season. The dearness of provisions incites, the hope of increase of wages allures, and drink puts them in motion. The coal-heavers began, and it is well it is not a hard frost, for they have stopped all coals coming to Town. The sawyers rose too, and at last the sailors who have committed great outrages in merchant ships, and prevented them from sailing. I just touch the heads, which would make a great figure if dilated in Baker's Chronicle among the calamities at the end of a reign. The last mob, however, took an extraordinary turn ; for many thousand sailors came to petition the Parliament yesterday, but in the most respectful and peaceable manner ; desired only to have their grievances examined ; if reasonable, redressed ; if not reasonable, they would be satisfied. Being told that their flags and colours, with which they paraded, were illegal, they cast them away. Nor was this all : they declared for the King and Parliament, and beat and drove away Wilkes's mob.

STRAWBERRY HILL, June 9, 1768.

Yesterday was fixed for the appearance of Wilkes in Westminster Hall. The Judges went down by nine in the morning, but the mob had done breakfast still sooner, and was there before them ; and as Judges stuffed out with dignity and lambskins are not absolute sprites, they had much ado to glide through the crowd. Wilkes's counsel argued against the outlawry, and then Lord Mansfield, in a speech of an hour and a half, set it aside ; not on their reasons, but on grounds which he had discovered in it himself. I think they say it was on some flaw in the Christian name of the county, which should not have been *Middlesex to wit*,—but I protest I don't know, for I am here alone, and picked up my intelligence as I walked in our meadows by the river. You, who may be walking by the Arno, will, perhaps, think there was some timidity in this ; but the depths of the Law are wonderful ! So pray don't make any

rash conclusions, but stay till you get better information. Well! now he is gone to prison again,—I mean Wilkes; and on Tuesday he is to return to receive sentence on the old guilt of writing, as the Scotch¹ would *not* call it, *the 45*, though they call the rebellion so.

STRAWBERRY HILL, *June 16, 1768.*

. . . What can one say of the Duke of Grafton,² but that his whole conduct is childish, insolent, inconstant, and absurd—nay, ruinous? Because we are not in confusion enough, he makes everything as bad as possible, neglecting on one hand, and taking no precaution on the other. I neither see how it is possible for him to remain Minister, nor whom to put in his place. No Government, no police, London and Middlesex distracted, the Colonies in rebellion, Ireland ready to be so, and France arrogant, and on the point of being hostile! Lord Bute accused of all and dying of a panic; George Grenville wanting to make rage desperate; Lord Rockingham, the Duke of Portland, and the Cavendishes thinking we have no enemies but Lord Bute and Dyson, and that four mutes and an epigram can set everything to rights; the Duke of Grafton like an apprentice, thinking the world should be postponed to a w—— and a horse-race; and the Bedfords not caring what disgraces we undergo, while each of them has £3,000 a-year and three thousand bottles of claret and champagne!

Having been relieved of his outlawry on a technical flaw, Wilkes, as Walpole has just said, was sent back to prison on his old convictions for seditious and obscene and blasphemous libels—two consecutive terms of ten and twelve months' imprisonment and a fine of £500 on each of the two charges. While in prison, after the bloodier riots which

¹ The Scotch called the rebellion in 1715 "*the 15*," and that in 1745 "*the 45*."—Walpole.

² Both Grafton and Camden thought proper to "retire out of town" during these ugly happenings. "The Prime Minister," wrote Junius in his letter to Grafton of April 24, 1769, "in a rural retirement, and in the arms of faded beauty, had lost all memory of his sovereign, his country and himself."

followed in St. George's Fields, he added to his offences by publishing in the *St. James's Chronicle* on December 10 a copy of the letter which Lord Weymouth had written to the magistrates urging them not to hesitate to use the military on that occasion—a letter described by Wilkes from his prison, in an accompanying paragraph, as “a hellish project brooded over by some infernal spirits without one moment's remorse.” Weymouth himself may have remembered, in sending his instructions to the magistrates, the King's own words to him regarding Wilkes in a letter of the previous April :

If a due firmness is shown with regard to this audacious criminal, this affair will prove a fortunate one, by restoring a due obedience to the laws. But if this is not the case, I fear anarchy will continue till what every temperate man must dread, I mean an effusion of blood, has vanquished.¹

In the following month, too, his Majesty had written to the same Minister *apropos* of the riots round the King's Bench Prison : “Bloodshed is not what I delight in, but it seems to me the only way of restoring a due obedience to the laws.”² Wilkes's fresh offence was immediately voted a seditious libel in the Commons, before which he was summoned to appear on January 27. Here, standing at the Bar, he declared defiantly that “whenever a Secretary of State shall dare to write so bloody a scroll, I will through life dare to write such prefatory remarks, as well as to make my appeal to the nation on the occasion.” Thereupon the exasperated Ministers moved to expel Wilkes from the House, both on account of his last libel and his previous offences, and carried the day with a majority of 219 against 137. Wilkes was promptly re-elected by Middlesex in February, March and April, the election being declared void in each case, and Wilkes incapable of taking his seat. In the election of March, though Wilkes was returned unopposed, a luckless attempt to stand against him was made by a timber merchant named Charles Dingley, who sent the following account of his adventures to Lady Chatham :

¹ Jesse's “Memoirs of George the Third,” Vol. I., p. 432.

² *Ibid.*, p. 437.

CHARLES DINGLEY TO LADY CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

Your ladyship has certainly heard of my late adventure. . . . In 1745, I entered myself a common soldier in the foot-guards. The remains of the same spirit of loyalty, and the desire to do some notable act, induced me to offer my services to snatch and destroy the dagger of confusion and rebellion, by representing the county of Middlesex. That I did not succeed (which may be for the best, as to me), was a mishap. I got into a scuffle a week before that of Brentford, and by a blow I gave Wilkes's attorney, Reynolds, I got such a hurt from his teeth, as to make my right hand very lame and useless. In this plight I sallied forth for Brentford: the timidity was so epidemic, that I had not one freeholder to attend me, or upon the hustings, as I could see; but of the adverse party in number three or four hundred, who all bore upon me to prevent my getting to offer myself as a candidate. Could I have got to have offered myself, I believe four to five hundred would have polled for me. I have been much threatened, had incendiary letters, &c., &c.; but have been brave and well, until within a few days past, when I was seized with agonizing pain; and it is thought owing to a crush at the door in getting upon the hustings; but God be thanked, from the application used, I have got rid of all pain, and am getting well.

According to Junius, "the miserable Dingley" was induced to oppose Wilkes by Grafton, and died shortly afterwards of a broken heart as a result of his contemptuous treatment. Walpole shows how dangerous it was to run counter to the mob whose watchword was "Wilkes and Liberty":

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]ARLINGTON STREET, *March 23, 1769.*

More tempests! Pray, Mr. Minister, keep up your dignity as well as you can; for I doubt that you will be a little laughed at. You are not now representing



July 13th 1793
Emery Walker, photographer

HORACE WALPOLE, FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD. *Act. 76*

From the drawing by George Dance, R.A. in the National Portrait Gallery

the conquerors of East and West. Your crest is fallen ! Our campaigns do not extend beyond the confines of Middlesex. We will begin with the *third* election at Brentford. One Dingley was sent to oppose Wilkes, but took panic and ran away, and nobody would propose him. The next day he advertised that he had gone thither with all the resolution in the world, provided there had been no danger, and so Wilkes was chosen once more. The House again rejected him ; but, lest the country should complain of not being represented, another writ is issued ; the Court is to set up somebody, and a new egg is laid for riots and clamours.

Oh ! but this is not all. As one or two towns had sent instructions to their members, it was thought wise to procure loyal addresses, and one was obtained from Essex, which, being the great county for calves, produced nothing but ridicule. I foresaw, and said from the first moment, that there could not be a sillier step taken, as it would sow division in every county and great town in England, by splitting the inhabitants into instructors and addressors. Well ! the aforesaid Mr. Dingley got an assembly of merchants, and carried an address ready drawn. It produced opposition and hubbub, and Mr. Dingley struck a lawyer in the face and beat out one of his teeth. The man knocked him down, drubbed him, and put him in the Crown Office.

This scheme defeated, an address was left at a public office to be signed by all who pleased, and yesterday was fixed for it to be presented at St. James's by six hundred merchants and others. This imposing cavalcade no sooner set forth than they were hissed and pelted ; and when they came to Temple-bar they found an immense mob, who had shut the gates against them, and they were forced to make their escape by any streets and by-lanes that were not occupied. Not a third part reached St. James's, and they were overtaken by a prodigious concourse, attending a hearse drawn by four horses. On one

side of the hearse hung a large escutcheon, representing the chairman at Brentford killing Clarke; on the other the Guards firing on the mob in St. George's Fields and shooting Allen, with streams of blood running down. This procession drove to St. James's Gate, where grenadiers were fixed to prevent their entrance, and the gates towards the park shut. Here the King, Ministers, and Foreign Ministers were besieged till past four, though the Riot Act was read, and Lord Talbot came down, and seized one man, while the mob broke the Stewart's wand in his hand. It was near five before they could recover and present the address, which the mob had tried to seize; they had so pelted the chairman of the committee of merchants, that he was not fit to appear. The Dukes of Northumberland and Kingston were as ill treated. The latter, coming from Bedford House, had been taken for the Duke of Bedford, and had his new wedding-coach, favours, and liveries covered with mud. Fifteen men are taken up, but I don't find that anything can be proved against them. In short, never was a more disgraceful scene! Don't wonder if *I* smile, who have seen more formidable mobs, and something of a better head opposed to them. Many cry out "Shame!"—but half, that cry out, I remember encouraging mobs, and for much worse ends than these poor infatuated people have in view. The Minister of those days would not have seen such a procession arrive in St. James's without having had intelligence of it, nor without being prepared for it. Those great and able persons, the Bedford faction, have conjured up this storm, and now are frightened out of their wits at it. All is perfectly quiet to-day, and the King has been at the House to pass the Bill for the Duke of Grafton's divorce.¹ Luckily, Newmarket begins on Monday,

¹ Grafton's domestic affairs were not less distracting at this time than his political troubles. Although he seems to have broken with his mistress, Mrs. Horton, in the winter or spring, he was divorced early in the year from the first Duchess of Grafton, who shortly afterwards married Lord Ossory. In the following June the Duke

during which holy season there is always a suspension of arms.

That Walpole had not erred on the side of exaggeration is obvious from the account written by the Duke of Chandos on the same day :

THE DUKE OF CHANDOS TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

LONDON, March 23, 1769.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday a most audacious mob assembled in the morning at the King's Bench prison ; from thence they marched to intercept the cavalcade of merchants, who were going to the King with their Address. They abused the gentlemen and greatly hurt many, throwing dirt, stones, &c., into their coaches. They shut the gates at Temple Bar, and would not let them pass, and in Chancery and Fetter Lanes they overturned carts and coaches to obstruct the passage that way. They then came down to St. James's Palace, and vented their rage upon every one who came to Court. Everybody was covered with dirt, and several gentlemen were pulled out of their coaches by neck and heels, at the Palace-gate. The Dukes of Kingston and Northumberland had their chariots broke to pieces, and their own and servants' clothes spoiled ; and some had the impudence to sing *God save great Wilkes, our King*. The troops beat to arms, and the guards were trebled. Many were greatly insulted, the mob coming up to the muzzles of their firelocks, but it was thought proper for them not to fire. The Riot Act was read twice to no purpose, and they did not disperse, but the Horse Guards were obliged to ride over them. Lord Talbot was greatly insulted, but acted with great spirit ; he seized two of the rioters

married Elizabeth, third daughter of Sir Richard Wrottesley, and pays a tribute in his memoirs to her " merit as a wife, tenderness and affection as mother of a numerous family, and exemplary conduct through life."

with his own hands, and delivered them to the Guards, which, with three more taken, I hope will fully meet with their proper reward. A hearse—painted on one side with two soldiers and an officer shooting at young Allen; on the other side, Balf and McQuirke knocking down Clarke—would have forced its way into the Palace, but was prevented: it is said to have been drove by a gentleman.

Out of one hundred and thirty merchants who went up with the Address, only twelve could get to the King, and they were covered with dirt, as indeed was almost the whole Court. Where this will end, God knows; I am sure it is high time for every friend of the King to exert himself. A Cabinet Council was held and a proclamation issued immediately, to command every one to do their utmost to suppress riots, and I was told that care will be taken to suppress the several meetings held by Wilkes's friends, the abettors, I fear, of these outrages.

The Duchess and Lady Augusta join in compliments with, dear Sir, your &c., &c.,

CHANDOS.

You may read this letter where you think proper, but do not part with it out of your hands.

Eventually a candidate for Middlesex was nominated for the Court in Colonel Luttrell, of the Guards, afterwards second Earl of Carhampton and commander of the forces in Ireland. He was defeated in the April election, polling only 296 votes to Wilkes's 1,143, but the House nevertheless resolved that he ought to have been returned, and declared him duly elected. Although Middlesex petitioned against it, this arbitrary resolution was upheld:

HORACE WALPOLE TO HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, April 14, 1769.

Yesterday, the day of expectation, is over: I mean the election at Brentford, for I must recollect that you have not been thinking of nothing else for a fortnight, as we have. It ended bloodless, both

sides having agreed to keep the peace ; chance ratified that compromise. Take notice, I engage no farther than for what is past. Wilkes triumphed, as usual, having a majority of between eight and nine hundred. The Court candidate, who had offered himself for the service, and who was as imprudently accepted, gave no proofs of the determined valour that he had promised. His friends exerted themselves as little ; and though he was to have been conveyed by a squadron of many gentlemen, his troop did not muster above twenty, assembled in his father's garden, broke down the wall that they might steal a march, and yet were repulsed at Hyde Park Corner, where the Commander lost his hat, and in self-defence rode over a foot-passenger. He polled under three hundred, and owed his safety to Wilkes's friends. This defeat the House of Commons are at this moment repairing—I believe I may add, by widening the breach ; for, as they intend to reject Wilkes and accept Luttrell, they will probably make the county quite mad. In short, they have done nothing but flounder from one blunder into another, and, by an impartial mixture of rashness and timidity, have brought matters to a pass, which I fear will require at last very sharp methods to decide one way or other. We have no heads but wrong ones ; and wrong heads on both sides have not the happy attribute of two negatives in making an affirmative. Instead of annihilating Wilkes by buying or neglecting him, his enemies have pushed the Court on a series of measures which have made him excessively important ; and now every step they take must serve to increase his faction, and make themselves more unpopular.

The clouds all around them are many and big, and will burst as fast as they try violent methods. I tremble at the prospect, and suffer to see the abyss into which we are falling, and the height from whence we have fallen ! We were tired of being in a situation to give the law to Europe, and now cannot give it with safety to the mob—for giving it, when they are

not disposed to receive it, is of all experiments the most dangerous ; and whatever may be the consequence in the end, seldom fails to fall on the heads of those who undertake it. I have said it to you more than once ; it is amazing to me that men do not prefer the safe, amiable and honourable method of governing the people as they like to be governed, to the invidious and restless task of governing them contrary to their inclinations. If Princes or Ministers considered that despair makes men fearless, instead of making them cowards, surely they would abandon such fruitless policy. It requires ages of oppression, barbarism and ignorance, to sink mankind into pusillanimous submission ; and it requires a climate too that softens and enervates. I do not think we are going to try the experiment ; but as I am sorry the people give provocation, so I am grieved to see that provocation too warmly resented, because men forget from whence they set out, and mutual injuries beget new principles, and open to wider views than either party had at first any notion of. Charles the First would have been more despotic, if he had defeated the Republicans, than he would have dreamed of being before the civil war ; and Colonel Cromwell certainly never thought of becoming Protector when he raised his regiment. The King lost his head, and the Colonel his rest ; and we were so fortunate, after a deluge of blood, as to relapse into a little better condition than we had been before the contest ; but if the son of either had been an active rogue, we might have lost our liberties for some time, and not recovered them without a much longer struggle.

While the vast majority of the people were without representation in Parliament—a Parliament, too, entirely at the mercy of the King—there was little prospect of “ Wilkes and Liberty ” becoming more than a watchword in England, though the agitation bore fruit in due season. In America, on the other hand, the leaders and representatives

of the people were now almost at one in their grim determination to settle once and for all the question of their right to self-government. Practically the whole Continent had approved the "circular letter" addressed by the Massachusetts Assembly to its sister legislatures urging the need of concerted action against the Government policy, and though the offending body had been dissolved as a result of its refusal to rescind that circular, the town meetings and the State Convention afforded the colonists abundant opportunity of voicing their grievances, and feeling their feet, as it were, as an independent people. "The struggle which began unsuccessfully at Brentford and Middlesex," as Lord Morley has said in his *Life of Burke*, "was continued at Boston, in Massachusetts. The scene had changed, but the conflicting parts were the same. The War of Independence was virtually a second English civil war. The ruin of the American cause would have been also the ruin of the constitutional cause in England; and the patriotic Englishman may revere the memory of Patrick Henry and George Washington not less justly than the patriotic American." A letter from Washington comes appropriately to illustrate his attitude of mind at this period, as well as to represent the kind of correspondence which filled the letter-bags of Virginian gentlemen who as yet were not seeking independence, but would not hesitate, in the *dernier resort* as Washington has it, to take up arms in defence of a liberty which they had derived from their ancestors. The letter was addressed to Washington's neighbour and intimate friend George Mason—who afterwards drafted the first Constitution of Virginia, and opposed the Constitution of the United States as encroaching too much on State rights—in sending him the resolutions of the merchants of Philadelphia respecting the non-importation of articles of British manufacture :

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO GEORGE MASON.

[*"Washington's Writings."*]

MOUNT VERNON, *April 5, 1769.*

Dear Sir,

. . . At a time, when our lordly masters in Great Britain will be satisfied with nothing less than

the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty, which we have derived from our ancestors. But the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question. That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the *dernier resort*. Addresses to the Throne and remonstrances to Parliament we have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of. How far, then, their attention to our rights and privileges is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufactures, remains to be tried.

The northern colonies, it appears, are endeavoring to adopt this scheme. In my opinion it is a good one, and must be attended with salutary effects, provided it can be carried pretty generally into execution. But to what extent it is practicable to do so, I will not take upon me to determine. That there will be a difficulty attending the execution of it everywhere, from clashing interests, and selfish, designing men, ever attentive to their own gain, and watchful of every turn, that can assist their lucrative views, cannot be denied; but in the tobacco colonies, where the trade is so diffused, and in a manner wholly conducted by factors for their principals at home [in England], these difficulties are certainly enhanced, but I think not insurmountably increased, if the gentlemen in their several counties will be at some pains to explain matters to the people, and stimulate them to cordial agreements to purchase none but certain enumerated articles out of any of the stores after a definite period, and neither import nor purchase any themselves. This, if it should not effectually withdraw the factors from their importations, would at least make them extremely cautious in doing it, as the prohibited goods could be vended to none but

the non-associators, or those who would pay no regard to their association ; both of whom ought to be stigmatized, and made the objects of public reproach.

The more I consider a scheme of this sort, the more ardently I wish success to it, because I think there are private as well as public advantages to result from it,—the former certain, however precarious the other may prove. In respect to the latter, I have always thought, that by virtue of the same power, which assumes the right of taxation, the Parliament may attempt at least to restrain our manufactures, especially those of a public nature, the same equity and justice prevailing in the one case as the other, it being no greater hardship to forbid my manufacturing, than it is to order me to buy goods loaded with duties, for the express purpose of raising a revenue. But as a measure of this sort would be an additional exertion of arbitrary power, we cannot be placed in a worse condition, I think, by putting it to the test.

On the other hand, that the colonies are considerably indebted to Great Britain, is a truth universally acknowledged. That many families are reduced almost, if not quite, to penury and want by the low ebb of their fortunes, and that estates are daily selling for the discharge of debts, the public papers furnish too many melancholy proofs, and that a scheme of this sort will contribute more effectually than any other that can be devised to extricate the country from the distress it at present labors under, I most firmly believe, if it can be generally adopted. And I can see but one class of people, the merchants excepted, who will not, or ought not, to wish well to the scheme, and that is those who live genteelly and hospitably on clear estates. Such as these, were they not to consider the valuable object in view, and the good of others, might think it hard to be curtailed in their living and enjoyments. As to the penurious man, he saves his money and he saves his credit, having the best plea for doing that, which before, perhaps, he had the most violent struggles to refrain

from doing. The extravagant and expensive man has the same good plea to retrench his expenses. He is thereby furnished with a pretext to live within bounds, and embraces it. Prudence dictated economy before, but his resolution was too weak to put it in practice ; “ For how can I,” says he, “ who have lived in such and such a manner, change my method ? I am ashamed to do it, and, besides, such an alteration in the system of my living will create suspicions of the decay in my fortune, and such a thought the world must not harbour.” He will e’en continue his course, till at last his estate comes to an end, a sale of it being the consequence of his perseverance in error. This I am satisfied is the way, that many, who have set out in the wrong track, have reasoned, till ruin has stared them in the face. And in respect to the needy man, he is only left in the same situation that he was found in,—better, I may say, because, as he judges from comparison, his condition is amended in proportion as it approaches nearer to those above him.

Upon the whole, therefore, I think the scheme a good one, and that it ought to be tried here, with such alterations as our circumstances render absolutely necessary. But in what manner to begin the work, is a matter worthy of consideration, and whether it can be attempted with propriety or efficacy, further than a communication of sentiments to one another, before May, when the Court and Assembly will meet at Williamsburg, and a uniform plan can be concerted, and sent into the different counties to operate at the same time and in the same manner everywhere, is a thing I am somewhat in doubt upon, and I should be glad to know your opinion of. I am, &c.

The meeting in May of the Virginian Assembly, of which Washington was a member, was the first after the arrival of Lord Botetourt as governor. The burgesses had been together but a few days when the resolutions which they passed respecting the rights of the colonies so alarmed the

Governor that, as stated on p. 217, he immediately dissolved the Assembly. Thereupon the burgesses adjourned to a private house in Williamsburg, assented unanimously to the non-importation agreement, and distributed it throughout the province for the signature of the people. Subsequently Washington, who had been a principal agent in the adoption of this retaliatory policy, wrote to a London merchant in sending out his customary order :

You will perceive, in looking over the several invoices, that some of the goods there required, are upon condition, that the Act of Parliament imposing a duty on tea, paper, &c. for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, is totally repealed ; and I beg the favor of you to be governed strictly thereby, as it will not be in my power to receive any articles contrary to our non-importation agreement, which I have subscribed, and shall religiously adhere to, and should, if it were, as I could wish it to be, ten times as strict.¹

Boston meantime was engaged in a controversial war which for the time being was largely confined to the press, with champions both on the popular side—led by the indefatigable Samuel Adams—and on the side of the Government, in whose pay, among others, were some of the Commissioners of Customs. When the anniversary of the repeal of the Stamp Act came round in March, 1769, Samuel Adams, under the signature of " A Son of Liberty," wrote a poster in which he openly hinted, for the first time, at the possibility of separation. The bill was found that morning on the Liberty Tree in Providence, Rhode Island, and it was printed both in the *Providence Gazette* and the *Boston Gazette*. " When I consider the corruption of Great Britain," it ran, " their load of debt, their intestine divisions, tumults and riots, their scarcity of provisions, and the contempt in which they are held by the nations about them ; and when I consider, on the other hand, the state of the American colonies with regard to the various climates, produce, soils,

¹ " Washington's Writings."

rapid population, joined to the virtue of the inhabitants—I cannot but think that the conduct of Old England towards us, may be permitted by Divine Wisdom, and ordained by the unsearchable providence of the Almighty, for hastening a period dreadful to Great Britain.”¹ Commodore Hood, however, unable to see beneath the surface, reported all quiet and “the worst certainly past” at Boston in this spring of 1769:

COMMODORE HOOD TO GEORGE GRENVILLE.

[*Grenville Correspondence.*]

BOSTON, April 15, 1769.

Sir,

I have received the very obliging letter you did me the honour to write me last November, and feel myself exceeding happy that the part I have taken respecting the affairs of this country has been such as to merit your approbation. Everything here has been quite quiet ever since I came, and I am very confident will remain so; for though it may not be easy to bring the Assemblies to acknowledge the power of Parliament relative to taxation, yet here will, I dare say, be no opposition by *force*, but an acquiescence to what they call burthens upon their trade, 'till such time as they are relieved by an Act of grace and favour. I have been very cautious, moderate, and circumspect not to widen, but rather to prepare the minds of the people for a healing of the unhappy difference that has subsisted between Great Britain and the Province, and I have singular satisfaction in a consciousness of not having given the least just cause of offence to any one; for though they are sensible of my doing that which appears most eligible to me, for the honour and dignity of the Crown, yet they are convinced of my readiness to show every possible mark of attention and regard, that is reconcileable to the duty I owe to my Royal Master. I have considered the differences unfortunately subsisting between England and

¹ “Life of Samuel Adams.” By Professor J. K. Hosmer.

America in a most serious light, and I have studied without ceasing to have nothing done by his Majesty's naval force under my command, that should appear in any manner distressing or harsh. My mind has been constantly on the stretch to this end, and I was not easy 'till I got here, so as every movement should be made under my own eye.

Allow me, my good Sir, to express my most sincere joy at the happy reconciliation that has taken place in your families,¹ and to say that I can foresee that it must be productive of consequences great and fortunate to my country ; in this light it must be viewed and enjoyed by the true friends of England as well as America.

The worst is certainly past here, and I hope and trust all will be well by-and-by. Perseverance from home must ensure a happy issue, which I flatter myself I shall be an eye-witness of before I leave America—and my command will be at an end next summer.

The English Cabinet, after many divided counsels, agreed at length to repeal all Townshend's colonial taxes with the sole exception of tea, this being retained—merely as an assertion of parliamentary right—against the declared opinions of Grafton, Camden, Granby and Conway. It was only by a Cabinet majority of one that North had his way in arguing that the continuance of the tax on tea was essential to the mother land's supremacy. Hopelessly ineffectual as a remedy, the repeal of the remaining taxes was notified to the Governors in the different colonies by Lord Hillsborough in a circular letter which was regarded as merely adding insult to injury. "This unfortunate and unwarrantable letter," as Grafton describes it in his autobiography, should have been drawn conformably to the minute which, as usual, was taken down at the Cabinet meeting by Lord Hillsborough himself. Copies are included in Grafton's memoirs both of the minute, which had been carefully corrected by various members of the Cabinet in order to be free from offensive

¹ Earl Temple and his younger brother, George Grenville, had lately patched up their quarrel with their brother-in-law, Chatham.

expressions, and of the letter into which it grew in Hillsborough's officious hands :

LORD HILLSBOROUGH'S MINUTE.

[*Anson's " Duke of Grafton."*]

At a meeting of the King's servants at Lord Weymouth's office—1st May, 1769.

Present :

Ld. Chancellor.	Ld. President.
Duke of Grafton.	Ld. Granby.
Ld. Rochford.	Ld. Weymouth.
Ld. North.	Genl. Conway.
Ld. Hillsborough.	

It is the unanimous ¹ opinion of the lords present to submit to his Majesty as their advice that no measure should be taken which can any way derogate from the legislative authority of Great Britain over the colonies. But that the Secretary of State in his correspondence and conversation be permitted to state it as the opinion of the King's servants that it is by no means the intention of Administration, nor do they think it expedient, or for the interest of Great Britain or America, to propose or consent to the laying any further taxes upon America for the purpose of raising a revenue, and that it is at present their intention to propose in the next session of Parliament to take off the duties upon paper, glass, and colours, imported into America, upon consideration of such duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce.

LORD HILLSBOROUGH TO THE COLONIAL GOVERNORS.

[*Anson's " Duke of Grafton."*]

WHITEHALL, May 13, 1769.

Sir,

Enclosed I send you the gracious speech made by the King to his Parliament at the close of the

¹ "How could Lord Hillsborough venture to assert the word *unanimous*?" wrote Grafton in referring to this letter in his autobiography. "For he could not have so soon forgotten that there was but one single voice for the measure more than was the number of those who were against it."

session on Tuesday last. What his Majesty is pleased to say in relation to the measures which have been pursued in North America will not escape your notice, as the satisfaction his Majesty expresses in the approbation his Parliament has given to them, and the assurances of their firm support in the prosecution of them, together with his royal opinion of the great advantages that will probably accrue from the concurrence of every branch of the Legislature, in the resolution of maintaining a due execution of the laws, cannot fail to produce the most salutary effects. From hence it will be understood that the whole Legislature concur in the opinion adopted by his Majesty's servants, that no measure ought to be taken which can any way derogate from the legislative authority of Great Britain over the colonies; but I can take upon me to assure you, notwithstanding insinuations to the contrary from men with factious and seditious views, that his Majesty's present Administration have at no time entertained a design to propose to Parliament to lay any further taxes upon America for the purpose of raising a revenue, and that it is at present their intention to propose in the next session of Parliament to take off the duties upon glass, paper and colours upon consideration of such duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce.

These, sir, have always been and still are the sentiments of his Majesty's present servants, and the principles by which their conduct in respect to America have been governed, and his Majesty relies upon your prudence and fidelity for such an explanation of his measures as may tend to remove the prejudices which have been excited by the misrepresentations of those who are enemies to the peace and prosperity of Great Britain and her colonies, and to re-establish that mutual confidence and affection upon which the safety and glory of the British Empire depend.

I am &c.

HILLSBOROUGH.

The effect of this futile attempt at compromise will be seen in the letter which follows from Hutchinson's brother-in-law, now happy to be employed—for a time at least—in work which did not expose him to popular resentment :

ANDREW OLIVER TO GEORGE WHATELY.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

NEW YORK, August 12, 1769.

Sir,

I have been in this city for some time past executing (with others) his Majesty's commission for settling the boundary between this province and that of New-Jersey. I left Boston the 11th July, since which my advices from London have come to me very imperfect ; but as my friend Mr. Thompson writes me, that he had drawn up my case, and with your approbation laid it before the Duke of Grafton, I think it needful once more to mention this business to you.

There was a time when I thought the authority of Government might have been easily restored ; but while its friends and the officers of the Crown are left to an abject dependence on those very people who are undermining its authority ; and while these are suffered not only to go unpunished, but on the contrary, meet with all kind of support and encouragement, it cannot be expected that you will ever again recover that respect which the colonies had been wont to pay to the parent state. Government at home will deceive itself if it imagines that the taking off the duty on glass, paper and painter's colours, will work a reconciliation, and nothing more than this, as I can learn, is proposed in Ld. H.'s late Circular Letter. It is the principle that is now disputed ; the combination against importation extends to tea, although it comes cheaper than ever, as well as to the other fore-mentioned articles. In Virginia it is extended lately to wines ; and I have heard one of the first leaders in these measures in Boston say that we should never be upon a

proper footing 'till all the revenue acts from the 15th Charles II. were repealed. Our Assembly in Massachusetts may have been more illiberal than others in their public messages and resolves ; yet we have some people among us still who dare to speak in favour of Government : But here I do not find so much as one, unless it be some of the King's servants ; and yet my business here leads me to associate with the best. They universally approve of the combination against importing of goods from Great Britain, unless the revenue acts are repealed, which appears to me little less than assuming a negative on all Acts of Parliament which they do not like ! They say expressly, we are bound by none made since our emigration, but such as for our own convenience we choose to submit to ; such, for instance, as that for establishing a post-office. The Bill of Rights and the Habeas Corpus Acts, they say, are only declaratory of common law, which we brought with us.

Under such circumstances as these, why should I wish to expose myself to popular resentment ? Were I to receive anything out of the revenue, I must expect to be abused for it. . . . I have no ambition to be distinguished, if I am only to be held up as a mark of popular envy or resentment. I was in hopes before now, through the intervention of your good offices, to have received some mark of favour from your good friend ; but the time is not yet come to expect it through that channel ! I will however rely on your friendship, whenever you can with propriety appear in forwarding my interest, or preventing anything that may prove injurious to it. . . .

Franklin sent his fellow-countrymen from London every encouragement in their resistance. To a committee of merchants in Philadelphia, which had sent him a copy of the non-importation agreements with a request that he would communicate them to the British merchants concerned in the American trade, he replied :

By persisting steadily in the measures you have so laudably entered into, I hope you will, if backed by the general honest resolution of the people to buy British goods of no others, but to manufacture for themselves, or use colony manufactures only, be the means, under God, of recovering and establishing the freedom of our country entire, and of handing it down complete to posterity.¹

This advice he often repeated ; and although he was too far distant to partake of the feeling kindled by sympathy throughout the colonies, yet his sentiments accorded perfectly with those of his countrymen.

The colonists saw in the repeal of all Townshend's duties except that on tea merely a move on the part of the home Government to stop the decline in British trade resulting from the non-importation agreements in America, the insignificant tea duty being retained for the express purpose of upholding the sovereignty of Parliament. The result was, as Sparks says in his biography of Franklin, " that it rather increased than allayed the popular feeling in America ; for it implied that they estimated their grievances by the amount of money demanded of them, and not by the principle upon which their demand was made. They renewed their non-importation agreements with more zeal than ever." Especially was this the case with the defiant spirits of Boston, whence Bernard this summer, after summoning a meeting of the Assembly for the first time for nearly a year, had departed for England, doubtless as pleased to be summoned home—more particularly as, with the baronetcy which had just been conferred upon him, he was returning as Sir Francis Bernard of Nettleham—as were the colonists to see his back. Boston made the day of his departure a public holiday, the townspeople rejoicing as though they had scored a national triumph. They had, indeed, sent repeated petitions for his removal, but he was now ostensibly recalled to help the Government with information and advice, the while, for the time being, he retained his office. When Bernard, preparatory to his departure, demanded his year's salary in advance,

¹ Franklin's Works. Edited by Sparks.

the Assembly flatly refused, just as it had declined in the same turbulent session to defray the expenses of the troops in accordance with the Billeting Act. Commodore Hood was far less sanguine in September than when he wrote to Grenville in the spring, but he had a handsome way of sending gloomy news. Let us hope that the very fine turtle now referred to was still thriving when it reached Pall Mall :

COMMODORE HOOD TO EARL TEMPLE.

[Grenville Correspondence.]

HALIFAX, September 2, 1769.

My Lord,

I have taken the liberty of sending you by his Majesty's ship *Launceston* a very fine turtle, which I have had by me near three months ; and as he eats heartily and thrives well, I am in hopes he will get safe to Pall Mall and prove acceptable.

The arrival of some late ships in America, which left London in June, and bringing various letters full of approbation of the conduct of the people of Boston, occasioned a meeting of the merchants, at which they spoke out, and with one voice declared that the repeal of the duties on paper, glass, &c., as mentioned in Lord Hillsborough's circular letter, would not relieve them from their grievances unless the duties on tea, sugar, wine, and molasses, were likewise repealed, without considering whether they were for the purpose of revenue, or a regulation of trade and commerce ; and I wish the true meaning of their declaration may not be, that no duty laid on by Parliament must be allowed to exist for any purpose *whatever*.

This step is very surprising to me, and the more so as the very people who repeatedly talked to me in a different language, and took pains to persuade me that a new Governor would soon be able to procure a proper petition for a repeal, waiving the point of *right*, and upon the inexpediency of Revenue Acts in America, now adopt all the violence of the merchants ; and it seems to be the general opinion at present

that they can force Administration and Parliament to yield to them in every respect, and that perseverance in non-importation is all that is necessary to procure them all they want.

If this is a truth it is a very melancholy one, as I dare say they will soon show a dislike to the Acts for regulating trade ; and by what I am told in late letters, no terms of accommodation will be listened to but such as they are pleased to prescribe. The leading men boast letters from very respectable characters in England, advising them to go on in the plan they have adopted, and that the end would answer their wishes. How then, my Lord, can any conciliating measures take effect here 'till harmony is restored at home ? which I hope soon to hear ; and, big with mischief as the appearances of things at present show themselves here, I shall no longer regard them than the unhappy misunderstanding prevailing amongst his Majesty's subjects in England. When once the nation tastes again the sweets of correspondent sentiment, and has confidence in the King's Ministers, it may do anything with the colonies.

The note here changes with every account received from London ; one day the people are very high, the next mighty humble and passive. They take their tone from your side the water, and have all along acted as they have been told from thence. God grant a happy union, and soon, in and with both countries. I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,

SAM. HOOD.

There could be no peace in either country until America had won its victory for popular freedom, and England been taught its lesson in the evils of personal government. The first establishment of public meetings in England has been dated from the summer of 1769, when George III., by declaring war against Wilkes and setting up his own candidate in the Commons, forced the electors to assemble in vindication of their exclusive right to choose their own

representatives. In the midst of the agitation created by the great meeting in the City of London, at which it was determined to present a remonstrance to the King against what Beckford described as "a corrupt and venal Parliament," no less a personage than the Earl of Chatham reappeared on the scene. "He himself," as Walpole told his friend Conway, "*in propria personâ*, and not in a strait waistcoat, walked into the King's *levée* this morning, and was in the closet twenty minutes after the *levée*. . . . The deuce is in it if this is not news. Whether he is to be King, Minister, Lord Mayor or Alderman, I do not know ; nor a word more than I have told you." ¹ Every one speculated as to the true meaning of this unexpected apparition, and of the royal audience :

It is not yet known whether he was sent for [wrote Burke to Rockingham] or went of his own mere motion. If he was sent for, the shortness of the conference seems to indicate that nothing at all has been settled. If he was not sent for, it was only humbly to lay a reprimand at the feet of his most gracious master, and to talk some significant, pompous, creeping, explanatory, ambiguous matter, in the true Chathamian style, and that's all. If, indeed, a change is thought on, I make no doubt but they will aim at the choice of him, as the puller-down of the old, and the architect of the new fabric. If so, the building will not, I suspect, be executed in a very workmanlike manner, and can hardly be such as your lordship will choose to be lodged in, though you should be invited to the state apartment in it ;— which, however, will not be the event, whether the arrangement is made agreeably to the inclination of Lord Chatham, or of those who employ him. The plan of the Court, (coinciding sufficiently with his dispositions, but totally adverse to your principles and wishes,) would be to keep the gross of the present Ministry as the body of the place, and to buttress it up with the Grenvilles and the Shelburne people. This arrangement would partly resist, and

¹ Walpole's Letters.

partly dissipate the present storm. It would give them a degree of present strength, much wanting in this ugly crisis of their affairs, and which, it would be admitted, is considerable, without subjecting them to the effects of that plan of connexion which is the greatest of all possible terrors to the Bute faction. Whatever they may do, or threaten at Court, I should fancy your lordship's conduct will not be affected by it one way or the other. If I have any guess, from public appearance or private information, it is steadily adverse (as far as there is steadiness in any of its dispositions) to your lordship, to your friends, and to your principles. Your strength is of another kind and, I trust, a better. The sole method of operating upon them, because they have no other standard of respect, is, by fear. They will never give your lordship credit for your moderation. Your doing but little, will be attributed to your not being in a situation to do more. With regard to your own friends, a certain delicacy of management (which is one of the things in which you excel) is certainly very proper, and much in the tenor of your whole conduct; but so far as the Court is concerned, the most effectual method seems to be far the best, and I could wish your lordship to choose such time, place and manner, for carrying through the business concerning the right of election, as will have most of a sober and well-conducted energy in it, without the smallest regard to their opinions or their representatives. Far from shunning the appearance of a lead in this business, it would be every way better that they thought the whole manœuvre as much owing to your lordship's weight in your county, and to your activity in exerting it, as to the general sense and inclination of the people, merely left to themselves. It is the true terror of those who take the lead in the scheme of private influence, to find that the people have their leaders too, in whom they repose a perfect confidence.¹

¹ Correspondence of Burke.



Emery Walker, photographer

CHARLES WATSON WENTWORTH,
SECOND MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM, K.G. 1730-1782

From the portrait painted in the School of Sir Joshua Reynolds
in the National Portrait Gallery

Rockingham and the "Old Whigs," however, though they had reason to fear that this sudden reappearance of the veteran war-horse boded the constitutional cause no good, were agreeably surprised to learn that Chatham had returned to support them, body and soul, in their fight for the principle involved in the Middlesex elections. The death of Newcastle in the previous November had smoothed the way for this new coalition, in which also both Temple and Grenville now found themselves united. Burke had a gratifying interview on the subject with Temple at Stowe, while on a visit to Lord Verney with his kinsman William Burke :

EDMUND BURKE TO THE MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM

[*Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*]

BEACONSFIELD, November 6, 1769.

My dear Lord,

Will. Burke and I spent the best part of last week with Lord Verney, and in a manner much to our satisfaction. We paid a morning visit to Stowe, where we found Lord Temple alone. We passed about three hours in the gardens. I was prepared to find them grand and extensive, but insipid ; however, it turned out otherwise. I thought many parts very interesting, and the whole as well managed as one could expect, from grounds which had been improved upon two very different ideas ; and where the revolution of taste had signalized itself upon the same objects. Be they what they may, it was impossible that the gardens or gardening should engross us entirely during our walk. We had a great deal of political conversation. He was in good humour, and his manner was fair and open. Without seeming offended, the turn of his discourse indicated at times that he had heard of your lordship, and your friends, expressing a disrelish to their junto, though he did not speak out upon it so clearly, as to make me quite satisfied that this was his meaning. He said that as we had got to see one another, and to act together, he hoped there would be no retrospect, no charge, and no recrimination. That we had done each other

a thousand acts of unkindness ; let us make amends by a thousand acts of friendship. He was of opinion that, let what would happen, the great point for us, and the country, would be, to get rid of the present Administration, which could only be effected by the appearance of union and confidence. He said, and he repeated it, that, to be sure, there was no treaty, expressed or implied, to bind the parties in honour to one another, or to any measure, except the establishment of the rights of the freeholders. In every thing else, we were both free :—" we were both free to play the fool as much as we pleased, mark that." He said these last words with a good deal of emphasis. Lord Chatham, he told us, was exceedingly animated against the Ministry. He was uneasy that the meeting of Parliament was postponed—lest a fit of the gout should intervene, though no moderate fit should keep him from the House of Peers on the first day of the session. His opinion is, that the affair of the Middlesex election should be taken up in that House, as well as the House of Commons. I can draw no certain inference from the last part of our discourse with Lord Temple, as it was rather in a matter of general speculation, than the business of the day. We talked of the Court system, and their scheme of having independent administrations. I spoke of this as the reigning evil ; and particularly mentioned the favourite idea, of a King's making a separate party for himself. He said this latter did not seem so bad a thing, if Lord Bute had not spoiled it. I said I thought it was mischievous, whether Lord Bute had a hand in it or not, and equally so. He contented himself with repeating his observation, as I did by repeating mine, and we said no more upon this subject. On the whole, I was glad to find that we understood one another thoroughly, on the nature and extent of our coalition ; which once being mutually explained, will not render it necessary to say anything upon it publicly, so as to give an advantage against us to the common enemy.

It was towards the end of this year that Burke wrote his memorable "Thoughts on the Present Discontents," the pamphlet in which he attributed all the errors of Government during the first nine years of the new reign to the corrupt influence of the Court, and set forth the political creed of the Old Whigs as the country's only hope of salvation. Burke's "truest admirers," as J. M. Rigg says in his essay on "The King's Friends" in the "Cambridge Modern History," "must recognise that in this pamphlet the political sagacity of which his name has become a symbol is none too apparent ; but, as yet, statesmen of all schools, with the single exception of Chatham, lacked either the insight to perceive, or the courage to proclaim, that the defective, the all but illusory, representation of the people was the true cause of the confusion, and its reform the paramount need, of the State." That the pamphlet underwent the scrutiny of the leaders of the party is clear from the letter with which Burke forwarded the first part of the work to Rockingham :

EDMUND BURKE TO THE MARQUESS OF ROCKINGHAM.

[*Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*]

1769.

My dear Lord,

I send you a good part of what I have been meditating about the system of the Court, and which you were so earnest to see carried into execution. I thought it better to let you see what was finished, rather than to postpone it until the whole was completed. The design appears distinctly enough, from what has been done. If you and your friends approve of it, you will be so good to send it back, with your observations, as soon as possible, that it may go to the press ; when I have got through the concluding part, you shall have that also, and on its return, it shall follow the rest.

It will be a matter very proper for the consideration of your lordship and your friends, whether a thing of this nature should appear at all. It is, in the first place, a formal attack upon that object which has been nearest and dearest to the Court since

the beginning of the reign ; and of course, if this thing should be supposed to express your sentiments, must put you on terms irreconcilably bad with the Court and every one of its adherents. I foresee, at the same time, that the other bodies who compose the Opposition, will desire " not to be comprehended in these declarations," as G. G. [George Grenville] said, upon such an occasion, two years ago, so that you irritate, past forgiveness, the Court party, and you do not conciliate all the Opposition. Besides, I am very far from confident that the doctrines avowed in this piece (though as dear to me as first principles) will be considered as well founded, or that they will be at all popular. If so, we lose upon every side.

As to myself, I am indifferent about the event. Only, for my credit, (as I fear from some particular opinions, and from this extensive previous communication, I shall be considered as the author,) I wish, that if our friends approve the design, I may have some tolerable support in Parliament, from the innumerable attacks it will bring upon me. If this be successful with the public, I shall have enough of odium ; I could wish it a little divided, if the sentiments should belong to others as well as to myself ; for it is upon this presumption, and with this view only, that I mean to publish. In order that it should be truly the common cause, make it at your meeting what you please. Let me know what ought to be left out, what softened, and what strengthened. On reading it to Will. and Dick, they thought some things a little too ludicrous. I thought much otherwise, for I could rather wish that more had occurred to me, (as more would, had my spirits been high,) for I know how ill a long detail of politics, not animated by a direct controversy, wants every kind of help to make it tolerable.

The whole is, in a manner, new cast, something to the prejudice of the order, which, if I can, I will rectify, though I fear this will be difficult. The former scheme would no ways answer, and I wish I

had entirely thrown it aside, as it has embarrassed me a good deal. The whole attack on Pitt's conduct must be omitted, or we shall draw the cry of the world upon us, as if we meant directly to quarrel with all mankind.

Burke's pamphlet was mildness itself in comparison with the venomous attack of Junius in his celebrated letter to the King, which appeared on December 19, while the Whig manifesto was still in the making. This was some months after the publication of the scathing indictment of the Duke of Grafton by the same mysterious writer, the secret of whose identity has puzzled the world to the present day. Though the weight of opinion supports the argument that "Junius" concealed the name of Philip Francis, then first clerk in the War Office, who was pronounced by Burke to be "the first pamphlet-writer of the age," no irrefutable proof has yet been advanced in support of the theory. The letter to Grafton leads up in a sense to that to the King himself, and the two may now be reprinted together :

JUNIUS TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

[*Letters of Junius.*]

July 8, 1769.

My Lord,

If nature had given you an understanding qualified to keep pace with the wishes and principles of your heart, she would have made you, perhaps, the most formidable Minister that ever was employed under a limited monarch to accomplish the ruin of a free people. When neither the feelings of shame, the reproaches of conscience, nor the dread of punishment, form any bar to the designs of a Minister, the people would have too much reason to lament their condition, if they did not find some resource in the weakness of his understanding. We owe it to the bounty of Providence, that the completest depravity of the heart is sometimes strangely united with a confusion of the mind which counteracts the most favourite principles, and makes the same man treacherous without art, and a hypocrite without deceiving. The measures, for instance, in which your Grace's activity has been chiefly exerted, as they were adopted without skill,

should have been conducted with more than common dexterity. But truly, my Lord, the execution has been as gross as the design. By one decisive step you have defeated all the arts of writing. You have fairly confounded the intrigues of opposition, and silenced the clamours of faction. A dark, ambiguous system might require and furnish the materials of ingenious illustration ; and, in doubtful measures, the virulent exaggeration of party must be employed to rouse and engage the passions of the people. You have now brought the merits of your administration to an issue on which every Englishman of the narrowest capacity may determine for himself. It is not an alarm to the passions, but a calm appeal to the judgment of the people upon their own most essential interests. A more experienced Minister would not have hazarded a direct invasion of the first principles of the constitution before he had made some progress in subduing the spirit of the people. With such a cause as yours, my Lord, it is not sufficient that you have the court at your devotion unless you can find means to corrupt or intimidate the jury. The collective body of the people form that jury, and from their decision there is but one appeal.

Whether you have talents to support you, at a crisis of such difficulty and danger, should long since have been considered. Judging truly of your disposition, you have, perhaps, mistaken the extent of your capacity. Good faith and folly have so long been received for synonymous terms, that the reverse of the proposition has grown into credit, and every villain fancies himself a man of abilities. It is the apprehension of your friends, my Lord, that you have drawn some hasty conclusion of this sort, and that a partial reliance upon your moral character has betrayed you beyond the depth of your understanding. You have now carried things too far to retreat. You have plainly declared to the people what they are to expect from the continuance of your administration. It is time for your Grace to consider what you also may expect in return from *their* spirit and *their* resentment.

Since the accession of our most gracious Sovereign to the throne we have seen a system of Government which may well be called a reign of experiments. Parties of all denomi-

nations have been employed and dismissed. The advice of the ablest men in this country has been repeatedly called for and rejected ; and when the royal displeasure has been signified to a Minister, the marks of it have usually been proportioned to his abilities and integrity. The spirit of the FAVOURITE had some apparent influence upon every administration ; and every set of Ministers preserved an appearance of duration, as long as they submitted to that influence. But there were certain services to be performed for the Favourite's security, or to gratify his resentments, which your predecessors in office had the wisdom or the virtue not to undertake. The moment this refractory spirit was discovered their disgrace was determined. Lord Chatham, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Rockingham have successively had the honour to be dismissed for preferring their duty as servants of the public to those compliances which were expected from their station. A submissive administration was at last gradually collected from the deserters of all parties, interests, and connexions ; and nothing remained but to find a leader for these gallant well-disciplined troops. Stand forth, my Lord, for thou art the man. Lord Bute found no resource of dependence of security in the proud, imposing superiority of Lord Chatham's abilities, the shrewd, inflexible judgment of Mr. Grenville, nor in the mild but determined integrity of Lord Rockingham. His views and situation required a creature void of all these properties ; and he was forced to go through every division, resolution, composition, and refinement of political chemistry, before he happily arrived at the *caput mortuum* of vitriol in your Grace. Flat and insipid in your retired state, but, brought into action, you become vitriol again.

Such are the extremes of alternate indolence or fury which have governed your whole administration. Your circumstances with regard to the people soon becoming desperate, like other honest servants you determined to involve the best of masters in the same difficulties with yourself. We owe it to your Grace's well-directed labours, that your Sovereign has been persuaded to doubt of the affections of his subjects, and the people to suspect the virtues of their Sovereign, at a time when both were unquestionable. You have degraded

the royal dignity into a base, dishonourable competition with Mr. Wilkes, nor had you abilities to carry even this last contemptible triumph over a private man, without the grossest violation of the fundamental laws of the constitution and the rights of the people. But these are rights, my Lord, which you can no more annihilate than you can the soil to which they are annexed. The question no longer turns upon points of national honour and security abroad, or on the degrees of expedience and propriety of measures at home. It was not inconsistent that you should abandon the cause of liberty in another country, which you had persecuted in your own ; and in the common arts of domestic corruption, we miss no part of Sir Robert Walpole's system except his abilities. In this humble imitative line you might long have proceeded, safe and contemptible. You might, probably, never have risen to the dignity of being hated, and even have been despised with moderation. But it seems you meant to be distinguished, and, to a mind like yours, there was no other road to fame but by the destruction of a noble fabric, which you thought had been too long the admiration of mankind. The use you have made of the military force introduced an alarming change in the mode of executing the laws. The arbitrary appointment of Mr. Luttrell invades the foundation of the laws themselves, as it manifestly transfers the right of legislation from those whom the people have chosen to those whom they have rejected. With a succession of such appointments we may soon see a House of Commons collected, in the choice of which the other towns and counties of England will have as little share as the devoted county of Middlesex.

Yet, I trust, your Grace will find that the people of this country are neither to be intimidated by violent measures, nor deceived by refinements. When they see Mr. Luttrell seated in the House of Commons by mere dint of power, and in direct opposition to the choice of a whole county, they will not listen to those subtleties by which every arbitrary exertion of authority is explained into the law and privilege of Parliament. It requires no persuasion of argument, but simply the evidence of the senses, to convince them that to transfer the right of election from the collective to the repre-

sentative body of the people contradicts all those ideas of a House of Commons which they have received from their forefathers, and which they have already, though vainly perhaps, delivered to their children. The principles on which this violent measure has been defended, have added scorn to injury, and forced us to feel that we are not only oppressed but insulted.

With what force, my Lord, with what protection, are you prepared to meet the united detestation of the people of England ? The City of London has given a generous example to the kingdom in what manner a King of this country ought to be addressed ; and I fancy, my Lord, it is not yet in your courage to stand between your Sovereign and the addresses of his subjects. The injuries you have done this country are such as demand not only redress but vengeance. In vain shall you look for protection to that venal vote which you have already paid for—another must be purchased ; and to save a Minister, the House of Commons must declare themselves not only independent of their constituents, but the determined enemies of the constitution. Consider, my Lord, whether this be an extremity to which their fears will permit them to advance, or, if their protection should fail you, how far you are authorized to rely upon the sincerity of those smiles which a pious court lavishes without reluctance upon a libertine by profession. It is not, indeed, the least of the thousand contradictions which attend you, that a man, marked to the world by the grossest violation of all ceremony and decorum, should be the first servant of a Court in which prayers are morality and kneeling is religion. Trust not too far to appearances by which your predecessors have been deceived, though they have not been injured. Even the best of Princes may at last discover that this is a contention in which everything may be lost but nothing can be gained ; and, as you became Minister by accident, were adopted without choice, trusted without confidence, and continued without favour, be assured that, whenever an occasion presses, you will be discarded without even the forms of regret. You will then have reason to be thankful if you are permitted to retire to that seat of learning which, in contemplation of the system of your life, the comparative

purity of your manners with those of their high steward, and a thousand other recommending circumstances, has chosen you to encourage the growing virtue of their youth, and to preside over their education. Whenever the spirit of distributing prebends and bishopricks shall have departed from you, you will find that learned seminary perfectly recovered from the delirium of an installation, and, what in truth it ought to be, once more a peaceful scene of slumber and thoughtless meditation. The venerable tutors of the university will no longer distress your modesty by proposing you for a pattern to their pupils. The learned dulness of declamation will be silent ; and even the venal muse, though happiest in fiction, will forget your virtues. Yet, for the benefit of the succeeding age, I could wish that your retreat might be deferred until your morals shall happily be ripened to that maturity of corruption at which the worst examples cease to be contagious.

JUNIUS.

JUNIUS TO GEORGE III.

[*Letters of Junius.*]

December 19, 1769.

Sir,

It is the misfortune of your life, and originally the cause of every reproach and distress which has attended your Government, that you should never have been acquainted with the language of truth, until you heard it in the complaints of your people. It is not, however, too late to correct the error of your education. We are still inclined to make an indulgent allowance for the pernicious lessons you received in your youth, and to form the most sanguine hopes from the natural benevolence of your disposition. We are far from thinking you capable of a direct, deliberate purpose to invade those original rights of your subjects, on which all their civil and political liberties depend. Had it been possible for us to entertain a suspicion so dishonourable to your character, we should long since have adopted a style of remonstrance very distant from the humility of complaint. The doctrine inculcated by our laws, *that the King can do no wrong*, is admitted without reluctance. We separate the amiable, good-natured Prince

from the folly and treachery of his servants, and the private virtues of the man from the vices of his Government. Were it not for this just distinction, I know not whether your Majesty's condition, or that of the English nation, would deserve most to be lamented. I would prepare your mind for a favourable reception of truth, by removing every painful, offensive idea of personal reproach. Your subjects, Sir, wish for nothing but that, as *they* are reasonable and affectionate enough to separate your person from your Government, so *you*, in your turn, should distinguish between the conduct which becomes the permanent dignity of a King, and that which serves only to promote the temporary interest and miserable ambition of a Minister.

You ascended the throne with a declared and, I doubt not, a sincere resolution of giving universal satisfaction to your subjects. You found them pleased with the novelty of a young Prince, whose countenance promised even more than his words, and loyal to you not only from principle, but passion. It was not a cold profession of allegiance to the first magistrate, but a partial, animated attachment to a favourite Prince, the native of their country. They did not wait to examine your conduct, nor to be determined by experience, but gave you a generous credit for the future blessings of your reign, and paid you in advance the dearest tribute of their affections. Such, Sir, was once the disposition of a people, who now surround your throne with reproaches and complaints. Do justice to yourself. Banish from your mind those unworthy opinions with which some interested persons have laboured to possess you. Distrust the men who tell you that the English are naturally light and inconstant; that they complain without a cause. Withdraw your confidence equally from all parties, from Ministers, favourites, and relations; and let there be one moment in your life in which you have consulted your own understanding.

When you affectedly renounced the name of Englishman, believe me, Sir, you were persuaded to pay a very ill-judged compliment to one part of your subjects, at the expense of another. While the natives of Scotland are not in actual rebellion, they are undoubtedly entitled to protection; nor

do I mean to condemn the policy of giving some encouragement to the novelty of their affections to the House of Hanover. I am ready to hope for everything from their new-born zeal, and from the future steadiness of their allegiance. But hitherto they have no claim to your favour. To honour them with a determined predilection and confidence, in exclusion of your English subjects, who placed your family, and, in spite of treachery and rebellion, have supported it upon the throne, is a mistake too gross, even for the unsuspecting generosity of youth. In this error we see a capital violation of the most obvious rules of policy and prudence. We trace it, however, to an original bias in your education, and are ready to allow for your inexperience.

To the same early influence we attribute it, that you have descended to take a share not only in the narrow views and interests of particular persons, but in the fatal malignity of their passions. At your accession to the throne, the whole system of Government was altered, not from wisdom or deliberation, but because it had been adopted by your predecessor. A little personal motive of pique and resentment was sufficient to remove the ablest servants of the Crown ; but it is not in this country, Sir, that such men can be dishonoured by the frowns of a King. They were dismissed, but could not be disgraced. Without entering into a minuter discussion of the merits of the peace, we may observe, in the imprudent hurry with which the first overtures from France were accepted, in the conduct of the negotiation, and terms of the treaty, the strongest marks of that precipitate spirit of concession, with which a certain part of your subjects have been at all times ready to purchase a peace with the natural enemies of this country. On *your* part we are satisfied that everything was honourable and sincere, and if England was sold to France, we doubt not that your Majesty was equally betrayed. The conditions of the peace were matter of grief and surprise to your subjects, but not the immediate cause of their present discontent.

Hitherto, Sir, you had been sacrificed to the prejudices and passions of others. With what firmness will you bear the mention of your own ?

A man, not very honourably distinguished in the world,

commences a formal attack upon your favourite, considering nothing but how he might best expose his person and principles to detestation, and the national character of his countrymen to contempt. The natives of that country, Sir, are as much distinguished by a peculiar character, as by your Majesty's favour. Like another chosen people, they have been conducted into the land of plenty, where they find themselves effectually marked, and divided from mankind. There is hardly a period at which the most irregular character may not be redeemed. The mistakes of one sex find a retreat in patriotism ; those of the other, in devotion. Mr. Wilkes brought with him into politics the same liberal sentiments by which his private conduct had been directed, and seemed to think that, as there are few excesses in which an English gentleman may not be permitted to indulge, the same latitude was allowed him in the choice of his political principles, and in the spirit of maintaining them. I mean to state, not entirely to defend his conduct. In the earnestness of his zeal, he suffered some unwarrantable insinuations to escape him. He said more than moderate men would justify ; but not enough to entitle him to the honour of your Majesty's personal resentment. The rays of royal indignation, collected upon him, served only to illuminate, and could not consume. Animated by the favour of the people on one side, and heated by persecution on the other, his views and sentiments changed with his situation. Hardly serious at first, he is now an enthusiast. The coldest bodies warm with opposition ; the hardest sparkle in collision. There is a holy mistaken zeal in politics as well as in religion. By persuading others, we convince ourselves. The passions are engaged, and create a maternal affection in the mind, which forces us to love the cause for which we suffer. Is this a contention worthy of a King ? Are you not sensible how much the meanness of the cause gives an air of ridicule to the serious difficulties into which you have been betrayed ? The destruction of one man has been now, for many years, the sole object of your Government : and if there can be any thing still more disgraceful, we have seen, for such an object, the utmost influence of the executive power, and every Ministerial artifice, exerted without success. Nor can

you ever succeed, unless *he* should be imprudent enough to forfeit the protection of those laws to which you owe your crown, or unless your Ministers should persuade you to make it a question of force alone, and try the whole strength of Government in opposition to the people. The lessons *he* has received from experience will probably guard him from such excess of folly ; and in your Majesty's virtues we find an unquestionable assurance that no illegal violence will be attempted.

Far from suspecting you of so horrible a design, we would attribute the continued violation of the laws, and even this last enormous attack upon the vital principles of the Constitution, to an ill-advised, unworthy, personal resentment. From one false step you have been betrayed to another, and as the cause was unworthy of you, your Ministers were determined that the prudence of the execution should correspond with the wisdom and dignity of the design. They have reduced you to the necessity of choosing out of a variety of difficulties ;—to a situation so unhappy, that you can neither do wrong without ruin, nor right without affliction. These worthy servants have undoubtedly given you many singular proofs of their abilities. Not contented with making Mr. Wilkes a man of importance, they have judiciously transferred the question from the rights and interests of one man, to the most important rights and interests of the people, and forced your subjects, from wishing well to the cause of an individual, to unite with him in their own. Let them proceed as they have begun, and your Majesty need not doubt that the catastrophe will do no dishonour to the conduct of the piece.

The circumstances to which you are reduced, will not admit of a compromise with the English nation. Undecisive, qualifying measures will disgrace your Government still more than open violence, and without satisfying the people, will excite their contempt. They have too much understanding and spirit to accept of an indirect satisfaction for a direct injury. Nothing less than a repeal, as formal as the resolution itself, can heal the wound which has been given to the Constitution, nor will anything less be accepted. I can readily believe that there is an influence sufficient to recall

that pernicious vote. The House of Commons undoubtedly consider their duty to the Crown as paramount to all other obligations. To *us* they are only indebted for an accidental existence, and have justly transferred their gratitude from their parents to their benefactors; from those who gave them birth, to the Minister from whose benevolence they derive the comforts and pleasures of their political life; who has taken the tenderest care of their infancy, and relieves their necessities without offending their delicacy. But, if it were possible for their integrity to be degraded to a condition so vile and abject, that, compared with it, the present estimation they stand in is a state of honour and respect, consider, Sir, in what manner you will afterwards proceed. Can you conceive that the people of this country will long submit to be governed by so flexible a House of Commons? It is not in the nature of human society that any form of Government, in such circumstances, can long be preserved. In ours, the general contempt of the people is as fatal as their detestation. Such, I am persuaded, would be the necessary effect of any base concession made by the present House of Commons, and, as a qualifying measure would not be accepted, it remains for you to decide whether you will, at any hazard, support a set of men, who have reduced you to this unhappy dilemma, or whether you will gratify the united wishes of the whole people of England, by dissolving the Parliament.

Taking it for granted, as I do very sincerely, that you have personally no design against the Constitution, nor any views inconsistent with the good of your subjects, I think you cannot hesitate long upon the choice, which it equally concerns your interest and your honour to adopt. On one side you hazard the affections of all your English subjects; you relinquish every hope of repose to yourself, and you endanger the establishment of your family for ever. All this you venture for no object whatsoever, or for such an object as it would be an affront to you to name. Men of sense will examine your conduct with suspicion; while those who are incapable of comprehending to what degree they are injured, afflict you with clamours equally insolent and unmeaning. Supposing it possible that no fatal struggle should ensue, you determine at once to be unhappy, without the hope of a

compensation either from interest or ambition. If an English King be hated or despised, he *must* be unhappy ; and this perhaps is the only political truth which he ought to be convinced of without experiment. But if the English people should no longer confine their resentment to a submissive representation of their wrongs ; if, following the glorious example of their ancestors, they should no longer appeal to the creature of the Constitution, but to that high Being who gave them the rights of humanity, whose gifts it were sacrilege to surrender, let me ask you, Sir, upon what part of your subjects would you rely for assistance ?

The people of Ireland have been uniformly plundered and oppressed. In return, they give you every day fresh marks of their resentment. They despise the miserable Governor you have sent them, because he is the creature of Lord Bute ; nor is it from any natural confusion in their ideas that they are so ready to confound the original of a King with the disgraceful representation of him.

The distance of the colonies would make it impossible for them to take an active concern in your affairs if they were as well affected to your Government as they once pretended to be to your person. They were ready enough to distinguish between *you* and your Ministers. They complained of an act of the legislature, but traced the origin of it no higher than to the servants of the Crown. They pleased themselves with the hope that their Sovereign, if not favourable to their cause, at least was impartial. The decisive, personal part you took against them, has effectually banished that first distinction from their minds. They consider you as united with your servants against America, and know how to distinguish the Sovereign and a venal Parliament on one side, from the real sentiments of the English people on the other. Looking forward to independence, they might possibly receive you for their King ; but, if ever you retire to America, be assured they will give you such a covenant to digest as the presbytery of Scotland would have been ashamed to offer to Charles the Second. They left their native land in search of freedom, and found it in a desert. Divided as they are into a thousand forms of policy and religion, there is one point in which they all

agree : they equally detest the pageantry of a King, and the supercilious hypocrisy of a Bishop.

It is not then from the alienated affections of Ireland or America that you can reasonably look for assistance ; still less from the people of England, who are actually contending for their rights, and in this great question are parties against you. You are not, however, destitute of every appearance of support. You have all the Jacobites, Nonjurors, Roman Catholics, and Tories of this country, and all Scotland without exception. Considering from what family you are descended, the choice of your friends has been singularly directed ; and truly, Sir, if you had not lost the Whig interest of England, I should admire your dexterity in turning the hearts of your enemies. Is it possible for you to place any confidence in men, who, before they are faithful to you, must renounce every opinion, and betray every principle, both in Church and State, which they inherit from their ancestors, and are confirmed in by their education ? whose numbers are so inconsiderable that they have long since been obliged to give up the principles and language which distinguish them as a party, and to fight under the banners of their enemies ? Their zeal begins with hypocrisy, and must conclude in treachery. At first they deceive ; at last they betray.

As to the Scotch, I must suppose your heart and understanding so biassed, from your earliest infancy, in their favour that nothing less than *your own* misfortunes can undeceive you. You will not accept of the uniform experience of your ancestors ; and when once a man is determined to believe, the very absurdity of the doctrine confirms him in his faith. A bigoted understanding can draw a proof of attachment to the House of Hanover from a notorious zeal for the House of Stuart, and find an earnest of future loyalty in former rebellions. Appearances are however in their favour : so strongly indeed that one would think they had forgotten that you are their lawful King, and had mistaken you for a Pretender to the Crown. Let it be admitted then that the Scotch are as sincere in their present professions, as if you were in reality not an Englishman, but a Briton of the North. You would not be the first Prince of their native

country against whom they have rebelled, nor the first whom they have basely betrayed. Have you forgotten, Sir, or has your favourite concealed from you, that part of our history when the unhappy Charles (and he too had private virtues) fled from the open, avowed indignation of his English subjects, and surrendered himself at discretion to the good faith of his own countrymen? Without looking for support in their affections as subjects, he applied only to their honour as gentlemen for protection. They received him as they would your Majesty, with bows, and smiles, and falsehood, and kept him until they had settled their bargain with the English Parliament; then basely sold their native King to the vengeance of his enemies. This, Sir, was not the act of a few traitors, but the deliberate treachery of a Scotch Parliament, representing the nation. A wise Prince might draw from it two lessons of equal utility to himself. On one side he might learn to dread the undisguised resentment of a generous people, who dare openly assert their rights, and who, in a just cause, are ready to meet their Sovereign in the field. On the other side he would be taught to apprehend something far more formidable: a fawning treachery, against which no prudence can guard, no courage can defend. The insidious smile upon the cheek would warn him of the canker in the heart.

From the uses to which one part of the army has been too frequently applied you have some reason to expect that there are no services they would refuse. Here, too, we trace the partiality of your understanding. You take the sense of the army from the conduct of the Guards, with the same justice with which you collect the sense of the people from the representations of the Ministry. Your marching regiments, Sir, will not make the Guards their example, either as soldiers or subjects. They feel and resent, as they ought to do, that invariable, undistinguishing favour with which the Guards are treated; while those gallant troops, by whom every hazardous, every laborious service is performed, are left to perish in garrisons abroad, or pine in quarters at home, neglected and forgotten. If they had no sense of the great original duty they owe their country, their resentment would operate like patriotism, and leave your cause to

be defended by those to whom you have lavished the rewards and honours of their profession. The Prætorian bands, enervated and debauched as they were, had still strength enough to awe the Roman populace : but when the distant legions took the alarm, they marched to Rome, and gave away the Empire.

On this side then, whichever way you turn your eyes, you see nothing but perplexity and distress. You may determine to support the very Ministry who have reduced your affairs to this deplorable situation : you may shelter yourself under the forms of a Parliament, and set your people at defiance. But be assured, Sir, that such a resolution would be as imprudent as it would be odious. If it did not immediately shake your establishment, it would rob you of your peace of mind for ever.

On the other, how different is the prospect ! How easy, how safe and honourable is the path before you ! The English nation declare they are grossly injured by their representatives, and solicit your Majesty to exert your lawful prerogative, and give them an opportunity of recalling a trust which, they find, has been scandalously abused. You are not to be told that the power of the House of Commons is not original, but delegated to them for the welfare of the people, from whom they received it. A question of right arises between the constituent and the representative body. By what authority shall it be decided ? Will your Majesty interfere in a question in which you have properly no immediate concern ? It would be a step equally odious and unnecessary. Shall the Lords be called upon to determine the rights and privileges of the Commons ? They cannot do it without a flagrant breach of the Constitution. Or will you refer it to the judges ? They have often told your ancestors that the law of Parliament is above them. What part then remains, but to leave it to the people to determine for themselves ? They alone are injured ; and since there is no superior power to which the cause can be referred, they alone ought to determine.

I do not mean to perplex you with a tedious argument upon a subject already so discussed that inspiration could hardly throw a new light upon it. There are, however, two

points of view in which it particularly imports your Majesty to consider the late proceedings of the House of Commons. By depriving a subject of his birthright, they have attributed to their own vote an authority equal to an act of the whole legislature ; and, though perhaps not with the same motives, have strictly followed the example of the Long Parliament, which first declared the regal office useless, and soon after, with as little ceremony, dissolved the House of Lords. The same pretended power which robs an English subject of his birthright, may rob an English King of his Crown. In another view, the resolution of the House of Commons, apparently not so dangerous to your Majesty, is still more alarming to your people. Not contented with divesting one man of his right, they have arbitrarily conveyed that right to another. They have set aside a return as illegal, without daring to censure those officers who were particularly apprized of Mr. Wilkes's incapacity not only by the declaration of the House, but expressly by the writ directed to them, and who nevertheless returned him as duly elected. They have rejected the majority of votes, the only criterion by which our laws judge of the sense of the people ; they have transferred the right of election from the collective to the representative body ; and by these acts, taken separately or together, they have essentially altered the original constitution of the House of Commons. Versed, as your Majesty undoubtedly is, in the English history, it cannot easily escape you how much it is your interest, as well as your duty, to prevent one of the three Estates from encroaching upon the province of the other two, or assuming the authority of them all. When once they have departed from the great constitutional line, by which all their proceedings should be directed, who will answer for their future moderation ? Or what assurance will they give you that, when they have trampled upon their equals, they will submit to a superior ? Your Majesty may learn hereafter how nearly the slave and tyrant are allied.

Some of your Council, more candid than the rest, admit the abandoned profligacy of the present House of Commons, but oppose their dissolution upon an opinion, I confess not very unwarrantable, that their successors would be equally

at the disposal of the Treasury. I cannot persuade myself that the nation will have profited so little by experience. But if that opinion were well founded, you might then gratify our wishes at an easy rate, and appease the present clamour against your Government, without offering any material injury to the favourite cause of corruption.

You have still an honourable part to act. The affections of your subjects may still be recovered. But before you subdue *their* hearts, you must gain a noble victory over your own. Discard those little, personal resentments which have too long directed your public conduct. Pardon this man the remainder of his punishment ; and if resentment still prevails, make it, what it should have been long since, an act, not of mercy, but contempt. He will soon fall back into his natural station, a silent senator, and hardly supporting the weekly eloquence of a newspaper. The gentle breath of peace would leave him on the surface, neglected and unremoved. It is only the tempest that lifts him from his place.

Without consulting your Minister, call together your whole Council. Let it appear to the public that you can determine and act for yourself. Come forward to your people. Lay aside the wretched formalities of a King, and speak to your subjects with the spirit of a man, and in the language of a gentleman. Tell them you have been fatally deceived. The acknowledgment will be no disgrace, but rather an honour to your understanding. Tell them you are determined to remove every cause of complaint against your Government ; that you will give your confidence to no man who does not possess the confidence of your subjects ; and leave it to themselves to determine, by their conduct at a future election, whether or no it be in reality the general sense of the nation that their rights have been arbitrarily invaded by the present House of Commons, and the Constitution betrayed. They will then do justice to their representatives and to themselves.

These sentiments, Sir, and the style they are conveyed in, may be offensive, perhaps, because they are new to you. Accustomed to the language of courtiers, you measure their affections by the vehemence of their expression ; and when they only praise you indirectly, you admire their sincerity.

But this is not a time to trifle with your fortune. They deceive you, Sir, who tell you that you have many friends whose affections are founded upon a principle of personal attachment. The first foundation of friendship is not the power of conferring benefits, but the equality with which they are received, and *may* be returned. The fortune which made you a King forbade you to have a friend. It is a law of nature which cannot be violated with impunity. The mistaken Prince, who looks for friendship, will find a favourite and in that favourite the ruin of his affairs.

The people of England are loyal to the House of Hanover, not from a vain preference of one family to another, but from a conviction that the establishment of that family was necessary to the support of their civil and religious liberties. This, Sir, is a principle of allegiance equally solid and rational, fit for Englishmen to adopt, and well worthy of your Majesty's encouragement. We cannot long be deluded by nominal distinctions. The name of Stuart, of itself, is only contemptible; armed with the sovereign authority, their principles are formidable. The Prince who imitates their conduct should be warned by their example; and while he plumes himself upon the security of his title to the Crown, should remember that, as it was acquired by one revolution, it may be lost by another.

JUNIUS.

No wonder Rockingham, in one of his letters, described this last philippic as "indeed a very animated and able performance, but rather too much of a flagellation"! ¹

¹ Rockingham Memoirs, Vol. II., p. 147.

CHAPTER VII

"THE DIE IS CAST"

Chatham Leads the Opposition—His Speeches in the Lords—Triumph of the Court—Charles Yorke's Dramatic Death—Grafton's Resignation—North Succeeds as Prime Minister—Wilkes as City Alderman—Walpole's Vision of America's Destiny—Gaming at Almack's—First Blood at Boston—The "Massacre"—Beckford's Address to the King—Chatham's Congratulations to Beckford—Deaths of Beckford, Granby and Grenville—Samuel Adams the "all in all"—Committees of Correspondence—The Burning of H.M.S. *Gaspee*—The City of London and the Commons—Riots at Westminster—Charles Fox's Dazzling Beginnings—Wilkes *v.* Horne—Begging Letter from Wilkes—The Indian Crisis—Clive's Fate—Publication of the Hutchinson Letters—Massachusetts Petitions for his Removal—Duel over the Hutchinson Letters—Franklin's Acknowledgment—His Ordeal before the Commons—Boston's Historic Tea-party—English Opinion—George III. and Gage's Advice—North's Primitive Measures—Gage Succeeds Hutchinson—Boston's Determination to Resist—Effects in England of the Non-Importation Agreement—Wide Differences of Opinion—Washington's Views—Israel Putnam's Mission—"The Die is cast."

WHEN the new session was opened at Westminster on January 9, 1770, after a shower of petitions from various parts of the country demanding the dissolution of Parliament—arguing in some cases that its every act was invalidated by the presence of Luttrell in the Commons in place of the chosen of Middlesex—the Opposition hoped much from the fact that it was at length to be led by Chatham. The King's Address carefully avoided the discontent of his Majesty's subjects at home, being more concerned with the distemper that had broken out among horned cattle. Hence the name of Farmer George. Chatham moved an amendment condemning the conduct of the Ministers in the Middlesex election—"not to plead the cause of an individual, but of every freeholder in England"—and proposing an inquiry into the general conduct of the House of Commons. At his term of life, he declared, and loaded as he was with infirmities,

he might, perhaps, have stood excused if he had continued in his retirement and never taken part again in public affairs, but the alarming state of the nation called upon him, forcing him to come forward once more and to execute that duty which he owed to God, to his Sovereign, and to his country ; that he was determined to perform it, even at the hazard of his life. . . . He lamented the unhappy measures which had divided the colonies from the Mother Country, and which he feared had drawn them into excesses which he could not justify. He owned his natural partiality to America, and was inclined to make allowance even for those excesses. That they ought to be treated with tenderness ; for in his sense they were ebullitions of liberty, which broke out upon the skin, and were a sign, if not of perfect health, at least of vigorous constitution, and must not be driven in too suddenly, lest they should strike to the heart. . . . It was the duty of that House, he continued, also to inquire into the causes of the notorious dissatisfaction expressed by the whole English nation, to state those causes to the Sovereign, and then to give him their best advice in what manner he ought to act. That the privileges of the House of Peers, however transcendent, however appropriated to them, stood in fact upon the broad bottom of the people. They were no longer in the condition of the barons, their ancestors, who had separate interests and separate strength to support them. The rights of the greatest and of the meanest subjects now stood upon the same foundation : the security of law, common to all. It was therefore their highest interest, as well as their duty, to watch over, and guard the people ; for when the people had lost their rights, those of the peerage would soon become insignificant :

My Lords, let us be cautious how we admit an idea that *our* rights stand on a footing different from those of the people. Let us be cautious how we invade the liberties of our fellow-subjects, however mean, however remote ; for be assured, my Lords, that in whatever part of the empire you suffer slavery to be established, whether it be in America or in Ireland, or here at home, you will find it a dis-

ease which spreads by contact, and soon reaches from the extremities to the heart. The man who has lost his own freedom, becomes from that moment an instrument in the hands of an ambitious prince, to destroy the freedom of others. These reflections, my Lords, are but too applicable to our present situation. The liberty of the subject is invaded, not only in provinces, but here at home. The English people are loud in their complaints : they proclaim with one voice the injuries they have received : they demand redress, and depend upon it, my Lords, that one way or other, they will have redress. They will never return to a state of tranquillity until they are redressed ; nor ought they ; for in my judgment, my Lords, and I speak it boldly, it were better for them to perish in a glorious contention for their rights than to purchase a slavish tranquillity at the expense of a single iota of the Constitution.

In his second speech in the same debate Chatham acknowledged the probability of danger in setting up a vital difference between the two Houses of Parliament. But he argued, “ If apprehensions of this kind are to affect us, let us consider which we ought to respect most—the representative, or the collective body of the people. My Lords, five hundred gentlemen are not ten millions ; and if we *must* have a contention, let us take care to have the English nation on our side. If this question be given up, the freeholders of England are reduced to a condition baser than the peasantry of Poland. If they desert their own cause, they deserve to be slaves ! ”

Chatham, however, as Walpole says, argued in vain in a House little disposed to favour the cause of popular liberty. The only surprising result was the support of Lord Chancellor Camden, who, after declaring that he had beheld with silent indignation the arbitrary measures of the Ministry, expressed his complete concurrence with Chatham. “ I accepted the seals without any conditions,” he explained. “ I meant not to be trammelled by his Majesty (I beg pardon, by his Ministers). I have suffered myself to be so too long ” :

HORACE WALPOLE TO HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]ARLINGTON STREET, *January 10, 1770.*

The great day is over, and you will not be sorry to hear the event of it in both Houses. Without doors everything was quiet, except some cries in favour of Wilkes. Lord Chatham, who, Lord Temple said, was grown so violent that he could not moderate him, made his appearance and two long speeches, but, like an old beauty in an unfashionable dress, which became her in her youth, he found that his charms were no longer killing. Lord Mansfield answered his first speech, and Lord Sandwich defied any lord in the House to make sense out of the second. The object of the day was to create a breach between the two Houses, by an amendment proposed by Lord Chatham to the Address in which the House should inquire into the grievance of the Middlesex election. Their lordships were so little disposed to quarrel with their good brethren the Commons, though the Chancellor [Camden] himself laboured the point against the Court, that at ten at night the motion was rejected by an hundred to thirty-six. Old Myra, in her fardingale, will probably not expose herself again to neglect this session.

The other House sat till one in the morning, where the Court also triumphed; though Lord Granby and the Solicitor-General Dunning deserted to the minority; yet the latter were but 138 to 254. Thus ends the mighty bluster of petitions; which, notwithstanding all the noise and labour bestowed on them, have not yet been presented from about nine or ten counties of the fifty-two. They would come limping now to very little purpose. The most serious part is the defection of Lord Granby; for though he has sunk his character by so many changes, a schism in the army would be very unpleasant, especially as there are men bad enough to look towards rougher divisions than parliamentary. I hope the Ministers will have sense and temper enough to stop the pro-

gress of this wound. I shall not think them very wise if they dismiss the Chancellor. Such union in the whole legislature will reduce the present factions to insignificance, if not attended by presumption and excess of confidence. The clouds that hung over us are certainly dispelled by the success of yesterday ; but, as folly assembled them, it may assemble them again. Yet, when I say clouds are dispersed, you will understand I mean only those vapours drawn up into petitions. Where so many caldrons full of passions are boiling, they are not extinguished by one wet sheet of votes.

The triumph of the Court was complete. The King's Friends began to consider the Wilkes affair as good as finished :

LORD BARRINGTON TO SIR ANDREW MITCHELL.

[*Ellis's " Original Letters,"* Second Series, Vol. IV.]

CAVENDISH SQUARE, *January 10, 1770.*

Things at home are much mended in the course of last year. Wilkes and the Bill of Rights are entirely forgotten, except now and then when the wild and wicked wretches who composed that seditious faction abuse each other in print. They have openly quarrelled, and spare each other as little as they spared better men. The country and the Metropolis are perfectly quiet. The King (though most shamefully attacked in newspapers with a licentiousness which his Servants are very blamable to suffer) gains ground in the opinion and esteem of his People, and the Ministry though not highly rated is not disliked. If our Armies, Fleets, and Finances, are not exactly what the Nation wishes them to be, they are certainly in better condition than those of our Neighbours ; and if, contrary to my wishes, we must go to War about a most trifling object,¹ I do not see that we have much to fear.

¹ Lord Barrington alludes to the dispute with Spain concerning the Falkland Islands, settled none too creditably to the British flag in the following year.

Camden's revolt led, as every one expected, to his dismissal. Charles Yorke was appointed his successor after flatly declining the offer and promising his brother, the Earl of Hardwicke, that he would never desert his party in such a crisis. The King, however, according to Hardwicke's journal, called him into his closet after the *levée*, and "in a manner compelled him" to accept the Great Seal. Stricken with remorse, Yorke was taken ill the next morning, and died before the end of the week :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET,

Monday, January 22, 1770.

What a strange event ! Though my letters tread on each other's heels, they can scarce keep up with the rapid motion of the times. Mr. Yorke is dead !—yes, the new Chancellor ! He kissed the King's hand for the Great Seal on Wednesday night, and expired between five and six on Saturday evening. It was Semele perishing by the lightnings she had longed for. When you have recovered your surprise, you will want to know the circumstances. I believe the following are nearly the truth. To be second Chancellor in succession in his own house had been the great object of Mr. Yorke's life ; and his family were not less eager for it. This point had occasioned much uncertainty in their conduct. In general, they were attached to Lord Rockingham, but being decent, and naturally *legal*, they had given in to none of the violences of their party, particularly on the petitions, all the brothers absenting themselves on the first day of the session. When the Great Seal, on the intended dismissal of Lord Camden, was offered to Mr. Yorke, his connexions, and dread of abuse, weighed so strongly against his ambition, that he determined to refuse it. Some say that his brother Lord Hardwicke advised ; others, that he dissuaded the acceptance. Certain it is that he had given a positive refusal both to the King and the Duke of Grafton,

and that the Earl had notified it to Lord Rockingham. Within two hours after, the King prevailed on Yorke to accept.

The conflict occasioned in his mind by these struggles, working on a complexion that boiled over with blood, threw him into a high fever on Wednesday night, and a vomiting ensuing on Thursday morning, he burst a blood-vessel, and no art could save him. The Cerberus of Billingsgate had opened all its throats, but must shut them, for the poor man had accepted handsomely, without making a single condition for himself ; I do not reckon the peerage ; as a Chancellor must have it, or is a mute at the head of the House of Lords.

A new Chancellor was eventually found in Henry Apsley, one of the Commissioners, who was accordingly created Lord Apsley on January 24. Although the Government triumphed in the division lobby, it continued to be weakened by disturbing resignations, among them those of Lord Granby as Commander-in-Chief of the army ; John Dunning as Solicitor-General, to be succeeded by the less scrupulous Edward Thurlow, afterwards Lord Thurlow ; Sir John Cust as Speaker, succeeded by Sir Fletcher Morton ; and, to crown all, the Duke of Grafton as Prime Minister. Grafton retired because he realised that he no longer possessed that weight in the Cabinet which belonged to his position, and sensible “ that his Majesty was more forward to dictate his will to me than to inquire first my opinion on any measure that was to be considered, as had been his usual practice.”¹ He was piqued, too, at Chatham’s studied neglect of him since the return of that statesman to Westminster :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole’s Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, *January 30, 1770.*

I do not know how the year will end, but, to be sure, it begins with as many events as ever happened

¹ Grafton Memoirs, p. 234.

to any one of its predecessors. The Duke of Grafton has resigned: in a very extraordinary moment indeed; in the midst of his own measures, in the midst of a session, and undefeated. It is true, his last victory was far from being so complete as the former; and hence, as Horatio says, *have the talkers of this populous city* taken occasion to impute this sudden retreat to as sudden a panic. You must know, that last Friday, upon a question upon that endless topic the Middlesex Election, the Court had a majority, at past three in the morning, of only four and forty. The expulsion of the Chancellor, the resignation of Lord Granby, and of so many others, and much maladroitness in stating the question on the Court-side, easily accounted for that diminution in the numbers; and yet, though I believe that that defalcation determined this step, I know it was not a new thought. Whenever the current did not run smooth, his Grace's first thought has been to resign. When Mr. Yorke refused to accept, the fit returned violently: when he did accept the wind changed; and I believe I gave you an obscure hint of the extreme importance of that acceptance. Mr. Yorke's precipitate death unhinged all again; the impossibility of finding another Chancellor fixed the wind in the resigning corner, and the slender majority over-set the vessel quite. In short, it is over. A very bad temper, no conduct, and obstinacy always ill-placed, have put an end to his Grace's administration.

What will follow is impossible to say. In the meantime Lord North is first Minister. He is much more able, more active, more assiduous, more resolute, and more fitted to deal with mankind. But whether the apparent, nay glaring timidity of the Duke may not have spread too general an alarm, is more than probable; and there is but the interval of to-day to take any measures, as the question of Friday must be reported to the House to-morrow; whence, at least, the lookers-out may absent themselves till the trump is turned up.



Emery Walker, photographer

FREDERICK NORTH, SECOND EARL OF GUILFORD
(COMMONLY CALLED LORD NORTH)

From a crayon drawing by Nathaniel Dance, R.A. in the National Portrait Gallery

Personally the King needed no better “ trump ” for his purpose than Lord North, whose pliability suited the royal hand so well that the real Prime Minister was now his Majesty himself. Henceforward, and until the united colonists had wrested their independence from the Mother Country, the King’s will prevailed, teaching Englishmen a lesson in the evils of personal government which they have never forgotten. “ Lord North’s abilities,” to quote from the Duke of Grafton’s autobiography, “ though great, did not mark him as a character suited to the management and direction of great military operations. His lordship was formed for the enjoyment of domestic comforts, and to shine in the most elegant societies ; his knowledge, however, was very extensive, as was his wit ; but he became confused when he was agitated by the great scenes of active life.” The Court party rejoiced in his appointment :

LORD BARRINGTON TO SIR ANDREW MITCHELL.

[*Ellis’s “ Original Letters,”* Second Series, Vol. IV.]

CAVENDISH SQUARE, April 24, 1770.

. . . Though I can send you no very agreeable account of what is doing here, I can say with truth that in my opinion things are in many respects better than they were. Lord North bids fairer for making an able and good Minister than any man we have had a great while, Lord Chatham excepted, whose conduct this winter has cancelled many of the obligations this country owed him for his services in administration. I think also that our heats are subsiding, and that men are coming to their senses. When I can draw a like and at the same time a pleasing picture of our situation, you shall be again reminded of, dear sir,

Your ever faithful and affectionate

BARRINGTON.

The Cities of London and Westminster continued to present remonstrances, which the King either ignored or treated with contempt. Wilkes, his term of imprisonment expired, disappeared quietly into the country for a while, presently to return to more convivial duties as an Alderman of the City of London :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

STRAWBERRY HILL, May 6, 1770.

I don't know whether Wilkes is subdued by his imprisonment, or waits for the rising of Parliament, to take the field ; or whether his dignity of Alderman has dulled him into prudence, and the love of feasting ; but hitherto he has done nothing but go to City banquets and sermons, and sit at Guildhall as a sober magistrate. With an inversion of the proverb, "*Si ex quovis Mercurio fit lignum !*" What do you Italians think of Harlequin Podesta ? In truth, his party is crumbled away strangely. Lord Chatham has talked on the Middlesex election till nobody will answer him ; and Mr. Burke (Lord Rockingham's governor) has published a pamphlet¹ that has sown the utmost discord between that faction and the supporters of the Bill of Rights. Mrs. Macaulay² has written against it. In Parliament their numbers are shrunk to nothing, and the session is ending very triumphantly for the Court. But there is another scene opened of a very different aspect. You have seen the accounts from Boston. The tocsin seems to be sounded in America. I have many visions about that country, and fancy I see twenty empires and republics forming upon vast scales over all that continent, which is growing too mighty to be kept in subjection to half a dozen exhausted nations in Europe. As the latter sinks, and the others rise, they who live between the eras will be a sort of Noahs, witnesses to the period of the old world and origin of the new. I entertain myself with the idea of a future senate in Carolina and Virginia, where their future patriots will harangue on the austere and incorruptible virtue of the ancient English ! will tell their auditors of our disinterested-

¹ "Thoughts on the Present Discontents" appeared on April 23, 1770.

² Mrs. Catharine Macaulay, historian and controversialist, whose vigorous reply to Burke's pamphlet was published anonymously.

ness and scorn of bribes and pensions, and make us blush in our graves at their ridiculous panegyrics. Who knows but even our Indian usurpations and villanies may become topics of praise to American schoolboys ?

In a letter to the same correspondent only a few weeks previously Walpole wrote : “ The gaming at Almack’s, which has taken the *pas* of White’s, is worthy the decline of our Empire, or Commonwealth, which you please. The young men of the age lose five, ten, fifteen thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale, not one-and-twenty, lost eleven thousand there, last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard : he swore a great oath—‘ Now, if I had been playing *deep*, I might have won millions.’ His cousin, Charles Fox, shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se’nnight ; and is already one of our best speakers. Yesterday he was made a Lord of the Admiralty. We are not a great age, but surely we are tending to some great revolution.” ¹

Rumblings of the approaching revolution were already to be heard on the other side of the Atlantic. The first fatality in Boston occurred on February 22 of this year of 1770, when a boy—one of a crowd of youngsters engaged in the popular sport of baiting the six traders who refused to be bound by the non-importation agreement, and sold tea to the Tories as before—was shot dead, and another wounded, by a tea importer tormented in this way beyond endurance. The tea importer was convicted of murder, but after two years’ imprisonment was pardoned by Hutchinson, on the ground that the boys themselves had goaded him to the deed.

Other sources of increasing irritation in Boston were the perpetual squabbles between the townsmen and the soldiers of the 14th and 29th Regiments, culminating on the night of March 5, 1770, in the so-called “ Massacre of Boston.” Precisely what happened on this much-debated occasion cannot be stated in the face of the contradictory evidence of the ninety-six depositions afterwards published, but it is clear that both sides were spoiling for a fight, and that the mob,

¹ Walpole’s Letters.

which greatly outnumbered the nine soldiers involved in the affray, shouted insults at them, and struck them with sticks and balls of ice, never dreamt that the "Lobster-backs" would dare to fire except by order of the civil magistrate. Captain Preston, the officer of the guard, declared that he never gave the command to fire. "The air, however," to quote from the impartial summary in Professor Hosmer's life of "Samuel Adams," "was full of shouts, daring the soldiers to fire, some of which may have been easily understood as commands, and at last the discharge came. If it had failed to come, indeed, the forbearance would have been quite miraculous." Three of the townsmen were killed and eight wounded, and only the admirable conduct of Hutchinson, who was summoned to the scene, and promised the people that justice should be done, averted what might have been a much more sanguinary disaster. Preston and the soldiers concerned in the firing were afterwards tried for murder and all acquitted save two of the men, who were found guilty of manslaughter, but punished only by being branded in the hand in open court. This was months after the affair had happened, the trial being purposely postponed by the town in order that the passions of the populace should be allowed to die down. Everything, in short, was done to ensure a fair trial for the prisoners.

Nothing could have been better than the conduct of Boston on this occasion. Not only was the trial postponed, but an attempt was made to suppress the publication of the official report of the conflict lest the minds of the jurors should be prejudiced thereby, while two leaders of the popular party, John Adams and Josiah Quincy, served the prisoners splendidly as counsel for the defence. It was a triumph of fairness and discipline which proved that Boston was not quite the hotbed of lawlessness that the majority of Englishmen had been led to suppose. Boston could afford to be magnanimous in the face of its successful demand immediately after the affray for the removal from the town to the Castle of the two "Sam Adams Regiments," as Lord North now dubbed the 14th and 29th. Colonel Dalrymple, the commanding officer—no coward or duffer, as Commodore Hood has testified—was forced to consent to this humiliation

by the threatening attitude of the whole province, and although his act was regarded with shame in England he never seems to have been censured for it.

The session at Westminster had meantime ended with a fresh remonstrance from the City of London, made memorable from the fact that Lord Mayor Beckford ventured to supplement the formal address with a little speech of his own, pointing out that “ whoever had dared by false insinuations and suggestions to alienate your Majesty from your loyal subjects in general, and from the City of London in particular, is an enemy to your Majesty’s person and family, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer of our happy Constitution, as it was established at the glorious revolution ” :

RICHARD RIGBY TO THE DUKE OF BEDFORD.

[*Bedford Correspondence.*]

PAY OFFICE, May 23, 1770.

I am just come from Court, where the insolence of Beckford has exceeded all his or the City’s past exploits. The Remonstrance was read by the Town Clerk, to which the King read a very proper answer ; and then, very much I believe to his Majesty’s surprise, as well as of everybody else, my Lord Mayor made a speech, vindicating the citizens from any impertinent intentions towards the King, and violently arraigning those Ministers who should endeavour to prejudice his royal mind against the City. This is the first attempt ever made to hold a colloquy with the King by any subject, and is indecent to the highest degree. . . .

Walpole’s account is more detailed :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole’s Letters.*]

ARLINGTON STREET, May 24, 1770.

Not only the session is at an end, but I think the Middlesex election too, which my Lord Chatham has heated and heated so often over, that there is scarce a spark of fire left. The City, indeed, carried a new Remonstrance yesterday, garnished with my lord’s

own ingredients, but much less hot than the former. The Court, however, was put into some confusion by my Lord Mayor, who, contrary to all form and precedent, tacked a volunteer speech to the Remonstrance. It was wondrous loyal and respectful, but being an innovation, much discomposed the solemnity. It is always usual to furnish a copy of what is to be said to the King, that he may be prepared with his answer. In this case, he was reduced to tuck up his train, jump from the throne, and take sanctuary in his closet, or answer extempore, which is not part of the royal trade ; or sit silent and have nothing to reply. This last was the event, and a position awkward enough in all conscience. Wilkes did not appear. When he misses such an opportunity of being impertinent, you may imagine that his spirit of martyrdom is pretty well burnt out. Thus has the winter, which set out with such big black clouds, concluded with a prospect of more serenity than we have seen for some time. Lord Camden, Lord Granby, Lord Huntingdon, and the Duke of Northumberland, have no great cause to be proud of the *finesse* of their politics, and Lord Chatham has met with nothing but miscarriages and derision. Disunion has appeared between all parts of the Opposition, and unless experience teaches them to unite more heartily during the summer, or the Court commits any extravagance, or Ireland or America furnishes new troubles, you may compose yourself to tranquillity in your representing ermine, and take as good a nap as any monarch in Europe.

Chatham took a widely different view of the City's last Remonstrance and its significance :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO WILLIAM BECKFORD:

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HAYES, May 25, 1770.

My dear Lord,

In the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks ;
and the overflowing of mine gives motion to a weak

hand, to tell you how truly I respect and love the spirit which your lordship displayed on Wednesday. The *spirit of Old England* spoke, that never-to-be-forgotten day. If the heart of the Court be hardened, the feelings of the people will be more and more awakened by every repetition of unrelenting oppression on one part, and of determined and legal exertions on the other. But I forbear going into a dissertation where my mind is big only with admiration, thanks, and affection. Adieu, then, for the present (to call you by the most honourable of titles), *true Lord Mayor of London*; that is, *first* magistrate of the *first* city of the world! I mean to tell you only a plain truth, when I say, your lordship's mayoralty will be revered, till the Constitution is destroyed and forgotten. Believe me ever, with unalterable attachment, my dear Lord,

Your most faithful friend,
and affectionate humble servant,
CHATHAM.

Beckford only survived this eulogy a little more than three weeks, dying on June 21, to the no small satisfaction of the King and his friends. Chatham's approval probably gratified his most ardent follower more than the thanks of his own Common Council :

Your lordship's partiality to an old friend has been often experienced [he wrote in reply to the foregoing letter], but on no occasion more so than the present. What I spoke in the King's presence was uttered in the language of truth, and with that humilify and submission, which becomes a subject speaking to his lawful King : at least I endeavoured to behave properly and decently ; but I am inclined to believe I was mistaken, for the language of the Court is, that my deportment was impudent, insolent, and unprecedented. God forgive them all ! Their wickedness and folly will ruin this country.¹

¹ Chatham Correspondence

Death played havoc with the Opposition leaders this year, Granby dying with dramatic suddenness on October 19, and Grenville less than a month later. "The death of Beckford and Lord Granby, and that of Mr. Grenville," wrote Walpole to Mann, "leave Lord Chatham without troops or generals and, unless, like Almanzor [in Dryden's "Conquest of Granada"], he thinks he can conquer alone, he must lean on Lord Rockingham; and, God knows! that is a slender reed. Wilkes and his party are grown ridiculous; so that, upon the whole, Opposition is little formidable."¹ Chatham himself began to despair when news reached him this summer that as a result of the disorders in the colonies an Order in Council, of July 6, 1770, directed "that the rendezvous of his Majesty's ships, stationed in North America, should be in the harbour of Boston, and that the fortress should be put into a respectable state of defence, and garrisoned by the King's regular troops." "The poor country," he wrote to John Calcraft on this occasion, "seems doomed to the worst species of ruin; that wrought by her own hands, by oppressing, as foolishly as cruelly, the source of our greatness, the devoted colonies. How pregnant is error! and what a fatal progeny one false step in policy, the Stamp Duty, has brought forth!"²

The incidents of the next two years may be passed over briefly. Samuel Adams saw to it that the torch of liberty should not die out in America, whatever happened in the Old Country, infusing the patriots with new enthusiasm whenever he saw signs of flagging interest. His pen was scarcely ever idle; he controverted Hutchinson—now formally appointed Bernard's successor, with his wife's brother-in-law, Andrew Oliver, as Lieutenant-Governor—at every point, until Hutchinson had some reason to denounce him in his letters home as the "all in all," and "the great incendiary leader." Above all, he organised towards the end of 1772 the pioneer Committee of Correspondence, the object of which, to quote from the town records of Boston, was "to state the rights of the colonists, and of this Province in particular, as men and Christians and subjects; and to communicate and publish the same to the several towns and to

¹ Walpole's Letters.

² Chatham Correspondence.

the world as the sense of this town, with the infringements and violations thereof that have been, or from time to time may be, made.” Virginia improved on this in the following spring with the broader scheme of inter-colonial correspondence, binding together the sister colonies as the Massachusetts towns had been joined together. The remaining colonies gradually saw the wisdom of amalgamating in the common cause, and thus planted the seed which in the fullness of time was to bear fruit as the United States.

Boston was not the only scene of open defiance of his Majesty’s services. More reckless still was the burning of the English man-of-war *Gaspee*, eight guns, in Narragansett Bay, in March, 1772. The *Gaspee*, whose duty it was to enforce the Revenue Acts, had rendered itself obnoxious to a race which had long regarded such laws as made only to be evaded. Hearing that the little warship had run ashore one night in pursuit of a packet which refused to dip her colours as she passed, a party of well-armed townsmen, to the number of sixty-five, crept up in the night in eight whale-boats, and took the crew of nineteen by surprise. Lieutenant Duddington was shot in attempting to force the boarding party back, but as soon as his wounds were dressed he was put on shore with the rest of the crew and their belongings, while the raiders set fire to the *Gaspee* and completely destroyed her. “ The Attorney-General,” wrote John Pownall to Lord Dartmouth in August, “ considers this business of five times the magnitude of the Stamp Act.”¹ The culprits, however, were never revealed by their countrymen, and the deed had, perforce, to remain unpunished.

At home the chief political event of the same significant year was the fierce war between the Commons and the City in the matter of the debates, the publication of which was still technically a breach of privilege. As a test the editors of various newspapers were induced to print a report of the proceedings ; whereupon one of the printers was arrested on a Speaker’s Warrant, within the sacred precincts of the City itself. This involving a breach of the City Charter, the printer gave the Speaker’s messenger in custody, and both

¹ Dartmouth Manuscripts, Historical MSS. Commission Vol. II., p. 91.

were taken before Lord Mayor Brass Crosby, who, with Alderman John Wilkes and Richard Oliver, denied the legality of the Speaker's Warrant, discharged the printer, and committed the messenger to gaol instead. When the three committing magistrates were summoned by the House to answer for their conduct Wilkes refused to appear, arguing that since he had been declared incapable of sitting there he was beyond its jurisdiction. Walpole thus describes the scenes when Crosby and Oliver attended at the Bar, and, refusing to submit, were committed to the Tower :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

STRAWBERRY HILL,

Tuesday, March 26, 1771.

The die is cast. The army of the House of Commons has marched into the City, and made a prisoner ; but as yet no blood is spilt ; though I own I expected to hear there was this morning when I waked. Last night, when I went to bed at half-an-hour after twelve, I had just been told that all the avenues to the House were blockaded, and had beaten back the peace-officers, who had been summoned, for it was *toute autre chose* yesterday, when the Lord Mayor went to the House, from what it had been the first day. He was now escorted by a prodigious multitude, who hissed and insulted the members of both Houses, particularly Lord March and Sullivan, who escaped with difficulty, and the latter of whom they had mistaken for the elder Onslow. However, many retired with the Lord Mayor, who went away ill at ten at night, and the rest were dispersed by the extreme severity of the weather and by the lateness of the debate, which lasted till past four in the morning, when they sent Alderman Oliver to the Tower, who would make no submission, though the Ministers wished to be quit of him on easy terms. The Lord Mayor is to be judged to-morrow.

Many unpleasant passages there were for the Court. Sir George Savile left the House, protesting

against their proceedings, and was followed by some of his friends. Colonel Barré went farther, said in his place that the conduct of the House was *infamous*, that no honest man could sit amongst them, and walked away—and the House was forced to swallow so ungrateful a bolus. Nor was this all. Alderman Townshend charged all their arbitrary proceedings *on the baneful influence of the Princess Dowager of Wales*—yes, in those very words. . . .

This is not a letter, but a codicil to the last. I think we are going into great violences. A prodigious mob came from the City with the Lord Mayor on Wednesday, and a greater was at his service, but he would not encourage it. The two Foxes were assaulted and dragged out of their chariot, and escaped with difficulty. Lord North was attacked with still more inveteracy; his chariot was torn to pieces, and several spectators say there was a moment in which they thought he must be destroyed. Sir William Meredith, though in Opposition, and a Mr. La Roche, saved him from the fury of the people. He went into the House and spoke with great firmness, and as much coolness. Others were insulted, but not so outrageously. At twelve at night, the Ministers proposed to commit the Lord Mayor only to the Serjeant-at-Arms, on account, they said, of his ill-health, but, in truth, to avoid extremities; he protested, however, that he was perfectly well, and chose to accompany his brother Alderman to prison; on which he was sent to the Tower. The Deputy Serjeant who attended him had great difficulty to save from the fury of the populace, who insisted on hanging him on a signpost.

The Ministers are more moderate than their party, who demand extremities. Young Charles Fox, the meteor of these days, and barely twenty-two, is at the head of these strong measures, and equally offends the temperate of his own party and the warm ones of the Opposition. . . . The King was exceedingly hissed yesterday as he went to the House. Charles

Fox again narrowly escaped with his life, a large stone being thrown at him, which passed through both the windows of his chariot. Two committees are appointed ; one to enforce the powers of the House ; the other to inquire into the riots. I wish both do not inflame the riots ! The riots will certainly encourage war from abroad, and war will return them the compliment. But it were talking to the winds to urge this !

Charles James Fox (who had been returned to Parliament for Midhurst before coming of age), had completed his twenty-first year on the thirteenth of the preceding month. By his brilliant speeches in Parliament he had already astounded every one by his precocious genius, and, as a subordinate member of Lord North's Administration, had earned the fury of the mob by defending the conduct of Ministers in regard to Wilkes. His father, Lord Holland, while on the Continent, received letters full of praise of his son's dazzling performances. "The newspapers, I am told," wrote Holland to George Selwyn, "have forgotten me. You, I see, remember me. The excessive fine weather we have here, and Charles's fame—all these things together have certainly, for some days past, made my spirits better than they had been since I saw you ; and yet it is true the man I envy most is the late Lord Chamberlain, for he is dead, and he died suddenly." ¹

While in the Tower the civic prisoners were visited by Rockingham, Burke, the Dukes of Manchester and Portland, Admiral Keppel, and other leading Whigs. A few days afterwards several of the Ministers and others who had dared to attack the liberty of the Press were beheaded and burnt in effigy on Tower Hill. The prisoners were escorted home in triumph when prorogation brought their release, and the cause for which they had been imprisoned was virtually won. It was about this period that Wilkes quarrelled with his old patron, "Parson Horne," and the paper war, which waged furiously between them for the next two or three years, split the popular party into two sections, by

¹ "George Selwyn and his Contemporaries," Vol. II., pp. 374-5.

far the larger of which clung to Wilkes. “ It was in vain that his profligacy, his habits of begging, and his shabbiness in money matters, were set forth ; even his hideous aspect found admirers in men who could perceive no defect in the obliquity of his conduct, or even of his vision. ‘ What a handsome man is Master Wilkes ! ’ said one of this stamp. ‘ But surely,’ said the person addressed, ‘ he squints horribly.’ ‘ Why, yes,’ said his eulogist, ‘ he does squint a little ; but not more than a gentleman ought to do.’ ”¹ This reminds us of Gilly Williams’ earlier letter to George Selwyn, in which he wrote : “ Squinting Wilkes and ‘ Liberty ’ are everything with us. It is scarce safe to go the other side of Temple Bar without that obliquity of vision.”² For three successive years Wilkes was elected Lord Mayor by the Livery, but the Court of Aldermen not confirming the choice, it was not until 1774 that he filled that office. On one occasion the voting for himself and his friend, Frederick Bull, were equal, and it is to Wilkes’s credit that he chose to throw his own deciding vote into the scale of his friend. It was on the day following this election that he showed the less admirable side of his character in the following begging—and successful—letter to Chase Price, one of his generous supporters, and the member for Radnorshire :

JOHN WILKES TO CHASE PRICE.

[*Rockingham Memoirs.*]

My dear Price,

I am sorry the City business, and the Lord Mayor elect, will prevent me enjoying your company to-day at the Beef-steak Club. The Lord Mayor has ordered you a dinner-ticket for Tuesday, as he ought, in all gratitude, and perhaps you will amuse yourself with our—

“ Pomp without quiet, of bloodless words and maces,
Gold chains, warm furs, broad banners, and broad faces.”³

I don’t know who is your banker, but I know you are the best I ever had ; and as I am poorer now than for a monstrous long time, I shall be much obliged to

¹ Rockingham’s Memoirs, Vol. II., pp. 234-5.

² “ George Selwyn and his Contemporaries,” Vol. II., p. 275.

³ Pope.

you, if you could contrive for me a note of 150*l.* in two months or thereabouts, which would bring it to about the time you mentioned, a little after Christmas. It might be to bearer, and then any name would do. If you had a very small bank-note useless in any idle corner of your bureau, I should thank you for it in part. Forgive all this, and believe me most gratefully yours. Good-morrow.

Parliament's chief concern outside the Kingdom for the next few sessions was India, where extravagance and mismanagement on the part of the Directors, and greed on that of their officials, had reduced the East India Company well-nigh to bankruptcy. Young Charles Fox again distinguished himself by his reckless brilliancy :

HORACE WALPOLE TO SIR HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

April 9, 1772.

. . . The House of Commons is embarked on the ocean of Indian affairs, and will probably make a long session. I went thither the other day to hear Charles Fox, contrary to a resolution I had made of never setting my foot there again. It is strange how disuse makes one awkward ; I felt a palpitation, as if I were going to speak there myself. The object answered : Fox's abilities are amazing at so very early a period, especially under the circumstances of such a dissolute life. He has just arrived from Newmarket, had sat up drinking all night, and had not been in bed. How such talents make one laugh at Tully's rules for an orator, and his indefatigable application. His laboured orations are puerile in comparison with this boy's manly reason. We beat Rome in eloquence and extravagance ; and Spain in avarice and cruelty ; and, like both, we shall only serve to terrify schoolboys, and for lessons in morality ! " Here stood St. Stephen's Chapel ; here young Cati-line spoke ; here was Lord Clive's diamond house ; this is Leadenhall Street, and this broken column was

part of the palace of a company of merchants who were sovereigns of Bengal ! They starved millions in India by monopolies and plunder, and almost raised a famine at home by the luxury occasioned by their opulence, and by that opulence raising the price of everything, till the poor could not purchase bread ! ” Conquest, usurpation, wealth, luxury, famine—one knows how little farther the genealogy has to go. If you like it better in Scripture phrase, here it is : Lord Chatham begot the East India Company ; the East India Company begot Lord Clive ; Lord Clive begot the Maccaronis, and they begot poverty ; all the race are still living ; just as Clodius was born before the death of Julius Cæsar. There is nothing more like than two ages that are very like ; which is all that Rousseau means by saying, “ Give him an account of any great metropolis, and he will foretell its fate.” Adieu !

The Indian crisis was eventually settled by Lord North’s Regulating Act, which placed the management of the Company’s affairs on a sounder basis, the difficulties being tidied over, in the meantime, by a Government loan of £1,400,000 on easy terms. By the new Act, Warren Hastings was constituted the first Governor-General. Clive had left India in 1767, never to return, and was now rewarded for his unparalleled services by the remorseless and persistent attack inspired by the army of powerful enemies he had made when he did his best to stamp out corruption and disorder in the Company’s affairs. He was not without staunch friends, however, as a vote in the House during the debate proved—to the King’s annoyance :

GEORGE III. TO LORD NORTH.

[“ *Correspondence of George III. with Lord North.*”]

QUEEN’S HOUSE, May 22, 1773.

Lord North,

The vote carried this morning is a very strong proof of the propriety of your leaving to private gentlemen the punishing the servants of the East India Company ; and by that wise conduct you as an

individual have been in a minority that with every man of honour must do you credit, at the same time that the Minister had nothing to do with it. I own I am amazed that private interest could make so many forget what they owe to their country, and come to a resolution that seems to approve of Lord Clive's rapine. No one thinks his services greater than I do, but that can never be a reason to commend him in what certainly opened the door to the fortunes we see daily made in that country. I cannot conclude without adding, your conduct has given the greatest satisfaction.

The inquiry of a Select Committee into Clive's early proceedings in India took place in the following year. Broken by his shattered health, and his brutal treatment at the hands of an ungrateful country, he died by his own hand on November 22, 1774. He was not yet fifty. Meantime, on June 10, 1773, Lord North's Bill passed the Commons by a majority of 131 against 34 :

GEORGE III. TO LORD NORTH.

[*"Correspondence of George III. with Lord North."*]

Kew, June 11, 1773.

Lord North,

I am much pleased at hearing that the East India Bill has passed this morning by so great a majority, and trust that it will prove a remedy to some of the many evils, that, if not corrected, must soon totally prevent any possibility of preserving that great branch of commerce. Besides, it lays a foundation for a constant inspection from Parliament into the affairs of the Company, which must require a succession of regulations every year ; for new abuses will naturally be now daily coming to light, which, in the end, Parliament alone can in any degree check ; for the Directors, from views of self-interest, must court their servants who make rapid fortunes from the desire of remaining at the head of the Company.

One of the outstanding events of 1773, so far as America was concerned, was the publication of Hutchinson's private letters to Thomas Whately, the majority of which, with those of his colleagues to the same correspondent, have already been introduced into our narrative. The behaviour of the colonists in this connexion was altogether different from their impartial, even generous treatment of Preston and his “ Lobster-backs ” after the Boston massacre. Everything was done to prevent Hutchinson, now accused of betraying his fellow-countrymen, from obtaining a fair hearing. Franklin sent the letters to Thomas Cushing, the Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, on the express understanding that they were not to be published :

For my own part, I cannot but acknowledge [he wrote] that my resentment against this country, for its arbitrary measures in governing us, conducted by the late Minister, has, since my conviction by these papers that those measures were projected, advised, and called for by men of character among ourselves, and whose advice must therefore be attended with all the weight that was proper to mislead, and which could therefore scarce fail of misleading ; my own resentment, I say, has by this means been exceedingly abated. *I think they must have the same effect with you ;* but I am not, as I have said, at liberty to make the letters public. I can only allow them to be seen by yourself, by the other gentlemen of the Committee of Correspondence, by Messrs. Bowdoin and Pitts of the Council, and Drs. Chauncy, Cooper, and Winthrop, with a few such other gentlemen as you may think fit to show them to. After being some months in your possession, you are requested to return them to me.

As to the writers, I can easily as well as charitably conceive it possible that men educated in prepossessions of the unbounded authority of Parliament, etc., may think unjustifiable every opposition even to its unconstitutional exactions, and imagine it their duty

to suppress, as much as in them lies, such opposition. But when I find them bartering away the liberties of their native country for posts, and negotiating for salaries and pensions extorted from the people ; and, conscious of the odium these might be attended with, calling for troops to protect and secure the enjoyment of them ; when I see them exciting jealousies in the Crown, and provoking it to work against so great a part of its most faithful subjects ; creating enmities between the different countries of which the empire consists ; occasioning a great expense to the *old* country for suppressing or preventing imaginary rebellions in the *new*, and to the new country for the payment of needless gratifications to useless officers and enemies ; I cannot but doubt their sincerity even in the political principles they profess, and deem them mere time-servers, seeking their own private emolument, through any quantity of public mischief ; betrayers of the interest, not of their native country only, but of the Government they pretend to serve, and of the whole English Empire.¹

In another letter Franklin is said to have sent at the same time certain Machiavellian advice to use the letters cunningly, so that, " as distant objects, seen through a mist, appear larger, the same may happen from the mystery in this case." ² Franklin was astute and deep enough to give advice to this effect, but whether it was sent or not—and Professor Hoser states that he has been unable to trace such a letter—the result was the same. Such an air of mystery was wrapped round the notorious correspondence before it was published, so many dark hints were thrown out and eagerly devoured to the effect that the Governor had headed a treacherous conspiracy against the country, that the minds of the people were poisoned before they read the letters. It was useless for Hutchinson to protest that nothing in the whole of his correspondence differed in meaning from what he had said openly in his speeches to the Assembly and elsewhere. The result

¹ Memoirs of Benjamin Franklin.

² G. E. Ellis, *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1884, p. 672.

was a petition to the King for the removal both of Hutchinson and Oliver :

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF MASSACHUSETTS
TO GEORGE III.

[Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.]

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We your Majesty's loyal subjects, the representatives of your ancient colony of the Massachusetts Bay, in General Court legally assembled, by virtue of your Majesty's writ under the hand and seal of the Governor, beg leave to lay this our humble petition before your Majesty.

Nothing but the sense of the duty we owe to our Sovereign, and the obligation we are under to consult the peace and safety of the Province, could induce us to remonstrate to your Majesty the malconduct of persons who have heretofore had the confidence and esteem of this people, and whom your Majesty has been pleased, from the purest motives of rendering your subjects happy, to advance to the highest places of trust and authority in the Province.

Your Majesty's humble petitioners, with the deepest concern and anxiety, have seen the discords and animosities which have too long subsisted between your subjects of the Parent State and those of the American Colonies. And we have trembled with apprehensions that the consequences naturally arising therefrom, would at length prove fatal to both countries.

Permit us humbly to suggest to your Majesty, that your subjects here have been inclined to believe that the grievances which they have suffered, and still continue to suffer, have been occasioned by your Majesty's Ministers and principal servants being, unfortunately for us, misinformed in certain facts of very interesting importance to us. It is for this reason that former Assemblies have from time to time prepared a true state of facts to be laid before your

Majesty, but their humble remonstrances and petitions, it is presumed, have by some means been prevented from reaching your Royal hand.

Your Majesty's petitioners have very lately had before them certain papers from which they humbly conceive it is most reasonable to suppose that there has long been a conspiracy of evil men in this province, who have contemplated measures and formed a plan to advance themselves to power and raise their own fortunes by means destructive of the charter of the province, at the expense of the quiet of the nation, and to the annihilating of the rights and liberties of the American colonies.

And we do with all due submission to your Majesty beg leave particularly to complain of the conduct of his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esquire, Governor, and the Honorable Andrew Oliver, Esquire, Lieutenant-Governor of this your Majesty's Province, as having a natural and efficacious tendency to interrupt and alienate the affections of your Majesty our Rightful Sovereign from this your Loyal Province, to destroy that harmony and good-will between Great Britain and this Colony, which every honest subject would strive to establish, to excite the resentment of the British Administration against this province, to defeat the endeavours of our Agents and friends to serve us by a fair representation of our state of facts, to prevent our humble and repeated petitions from reaching the ear of your Majesty, or having their desired effect. And finally that the said Thomas Hutchinson and Andrew Oliver have been among the chief instruments in introducing a fleet and an army into this province, to establish and perpetuate their plans, whereby they have been not only greatly instrumental in disturbing the peace and harmony of the government, and causing unnatural and hateful discords and animosities between the several parts of your Majesty's extensive dominions, but are justly chargeable with all that corruption of morals and all that confusion, misery, and bloodshed, which have

been the natural effects of posting an army in a populous town.

Wherefore we most humbly pray that your Majesty would be pleased to remove from their posts in this government the said Thomas Hutchinson, Esquire, and Andrew Oliver, Esquire, who have by their above-mentioned conduct, and otherwise, rendered themselves justly obnoxious to your loving subjects, and entirely lost their confidence : And place such good and faithful men in their stead as your Majesty in your great wisdom shall think fit.

In the name and by the order of the House of Representatives.

THO. CUSHING,
Speaker.

To the Earl of Dartmouth, who had succeeded Hillsborough as Secretary for the Colonies in the previous autumn, the Assembly wrote six days later, pouring out their grievances at length into what they had reason to hope would be more sympathetic ears than those of his predecessor :

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF MASSACHUSETTS TO
THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH.

[*Prior Documents.*]

PROVINCE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY,

June 29, 1773.

My Lord,

The re-establishment of the union and harmony that formerly subsisted between Great Britain and her colonies is earnestly to be wished by the friends of both. As your lordship is one of them, the two Houses of the Assembly of this province beg leave to address you. The original causes of the interruption of that union and harmony may probably be found in the letters sent from hence to administration, and to other gentlemen of influence in parliament, since the appointment of Sir Francis Bernard to the government of this province ; and there is great reason to apprehend that he and his coadjutors originally commended and laid the plans

for the establishing the American revenue, out of which they expected large stipends and appointments for themselves, and which, through their instrumentality, has been the occasion of all the evils that have since taken place.

When we had humbly addressed his Majesty, and petitioned both Houses of Parliament, representing our grievances, and praying for the repeal of the Revenue Acts, the like instruments, and probably the same, exerted themselves to prevent those petitions being laid before his Majesty and the Parliament, or to frustrate the prayer of them. Of this we have just had some new and unexpected evidence from original letters of Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant-Governor Oliver ; in which the former particularly and expressly, by his letter of the 10th of December, 1768, endeavoured, in co-operation with Governor Bernard, to frustrate a petition of a number of the council for the repealing of those acts, and to procure his Majesty's censure on the petitioners ; and the letters of the latter, by the disadvantageous idea conveyed by them of the two Houses of Assembly, manifestly tended to create a prejudice against any petitions coming from a body of such a character ; and his letter of the 11th of May, 1768, in particular, mentions the petition of the House of Representatives to his Majesty, and their letters to divers noble Lords, with such circumstances as had a tendency to defeat the petition, and render the letters of no effect.

It is now manifest, my Lord, what practices and arts have been used to mislead administration, both in the first proposal of American Revenue Acts, and in the continuance of them : but when they had lost their force, and there appeared, under the influence of your lordship, a disposition in Parliament to repeal those acts, his Excellency Governor Hutchinson, in his speech at the opening of the last session of the general court, was pleased to throw out new matter for contention and debate, and to call on the two Houses in such a pressing manner as amounted to

little short of a challenge to answer him. Into such a dilemma were they brought by the speech, that they were under the necessity of giving such answers to it as they did, or having their conduct construed into an acquiescence with the doctrines contained in it, which would have been an implicit acknowledgment that the province was in a state of subjection differing very little from slavery. The answers were the effect of necessity, and this necessity occasioned great grief to the two Houses. The people of this Province, my Lord, are true and faithful subjects of his Majesty, and think themselves happy in their connection with Great Britain.

They would rejoice at the restoration of the harmony and good will that once subsisted between the parent state and them : but it is in vain to expect this happiness during the continuance of their grievances, and while the charter rights, one after another, are wrested from them. Among these rights is the supporting of the officers of the Crown by grants from the Assembly ; and in an especial manner, the supporting of the judges in the same way, on whose judgment the province is dependent in the most important cases, of life, liberties, and property. If warrants have not yet been, or if they already have been issued, we earnestly beg the favour of your lordship's interposition to suppress or recall them. *If your lordship should condescend to ask what are the means of restoring the harmony so much desired, we should answer in a word, that we are humbly of opinion, if things were brought to the general state in which they stood at the conclusion of the late war, it would restore the happy harmony which at that time subsisted.*

Your lordship's appointment to be principal Secretary of State for the American department has given the colonies the highest satisfaction. They think it a happy omen, and that it will be productive of American tranquillity, consistent with their rights as British subjects. The two Houses humbly hope

for your lordship's influence to bring about so happy an event, and in the mean time they can with full confidence rely on your lordship, that the machinations of Sir Francis Bernard, and other known enemies of the peace of Great Britain and her colonies, will not be suffered to prevent or delay it.

This letter which has been agreed on by both Houses, is in their name, and by their order, signed and transmitted to your lordship, by, my Lord, your lordship's most obedient, and very humble servant,

THO. FLUCKER,
Secretary.

This letter, like the petition to the King, was despatched by the Legislature through the hands of Franklin, now the accredited agent of Massachusetts as well as of Pennsylvania. Franklin, the original cause of this none too creditable campaign, forwarded the Assembly's address to Dartmouth with the following letter :

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH.

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

LONDON, August 21, 1773.

My Lord,

I have just received from the House of Representatives of the Massachusetts Bay their Address to the King, which I now enclose, and send to your lordship with my humble request in their behalf, that you would be pleased to present it to his Majesty the first convenient opportunity.

I have the pleasure of hearing from that province by my late letters, that a sincere disposition prevails in the people there to be on good terms with the Mother Country ; that the Assembly have declared their desire only to be put into the situation they were in before the Stamp Act ; they aim at no novelties. And it is said, that having lately discovered, as they think, the authors of their grievances to be some of their own people, their resentment against Britain is thence much abated.

This good disposition of their's (will your lordship permit me to say) may be cultivated by a favourable answer to this Address, which I therefore hope your goodness will endeavour to obtain. With the greatest respect,

I have the honour to be, my Lord, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN,

Agent for the House of Representatives.

The Massachusetts petition to the Crown was referred to a Committee of the Privy Council, England, when the facts were published, becoming only less excited over the affair than America. Every one demanded to know how it was that private letters to the late Thomas Whately had found their way into the colonists' hands. Whately's brother, William, accused a Mr. John Temple of the theft, Temple having had occasion to go through the late member's papers. Thereupon Temple sent his accuser a challenge, and in the duel which followed Whately was grievously wounded. Franklin now came forward with his letter to the *Public Advertiser*, acknowledging his share in the transaction, without, however, explaining how the letters came into his hands :

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THE “ PUBLIC ADVERTISER.”

[*Letters of Hutchinson, Oliver, etc.*]

CRAVEN STREET, December 25, 1773.

Sir,

Finding that two gentlemen have been unfortunately engaged in a duel, about a transaction and its circumstances, of which both of them are totally ignorant and innocent, I think it incumbent on me to declare (for the prevention of further mischief, as far as such a declaration may contribute to prevent it) that I alone am the person who obtained and transmitted to Boston the letters in question.—Mr. W. could not communicate them, because they were never in his possession ; and for the same reason, they could not be taken from him by Mr. T.—They were not of the nature of private letters between friends. They were written by public officers to

persons in public station, on public affairs, and intended to procure public measures; they were therefore handed to other public persons who might be influenced by them to produce those measures. Their tendency was to incense the Mother Country against her colonies, and, by the steps recommended, to widen the breach, which they effected. The chief caution expressed with regard to privacy, was, to keep their contents from the Colony Agents, who the writers apprehended might return them, or copies of them, to America. That apprehension was, it seems, well founded; for the first Agent who laid his hands on them thought it his duty to transmit them to his constituents.

B. FRANKLIN.

Franklin was at once subjected to a storm of obloquy before which most men would have quailed. He was regarded as a sort of social pickpocket and shunned. Yet he doffed his familiar homespun for a gala suit when he stood before the Privy Councillors on January 11, 1774, to receive their report on the Massachusetts petition—the historic suit which he subsequently put aside only to wear again, years later, when he signed the treaty with England which gave his country its independence. The Court party had gathered for a rare spectacle of agent-baiting on this memorable January 11, and was not disappointed. Alexander Wedderburn, the Solicitor-General, with the righteous indignation of all humbugs—for he was himself the most unscrupulous of politicians—delighted his audience by a speech which for its sustained rhetoric and venomous abuse has probably never been excelled in English politics. Franklin's was the only face which remained unmoved throughout this ordeal, but if Wedderburn's object was not only to humiliate him before all the world, but also to make an enemy of one whom England at that time could ill afford to alienate, he succeeded beyond his highest hopes. Shelburne sent an indignant account of this attack to Chatham, who was not present, in the course of which he wrote: "Mr. Wedderburn, under the pretext of reply and the encouragement of the judges—the

indecency of whose behaviour exceeded, as is agreed on all hands, that of any committee of election ¹—entered largely into the constitution and temper of the Province, and concluded by a most scurrilous invective against Dr. Franklin ²; occasioned, as Dr. Franklin says, by some matter of private animosity; as Mr. Wedderburn says, by his attachment to his deceased friend Mr. Whately, the publication of whose correspondence contributed to inflame the Assembly to their late resolutions; and others say, it is the opening of a new plan of American government.” ³

A few weeks later Franklin himself described the scene :

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO THOMAS CUSHING.

[*Franklin's Works. With Life by Sparks.*]

February 15, 1774.

. . . Notwithstanding the intimations I had received, I could not believe that the Solicitor-General would be permitted to wander from the question before their lordships into a new case, the accusation of another person for another matter, not cognisable before them, who could not expect to be there so accused, and therefore could not be prepared for his defence. And yet all this happened, and in all probability was preconcerted; for all the courtiers were invited, as to an entertainment, and there never was such an appearance of privy councillors on any occasion, not less than thirty-five, besides an immense crowd of other auditors.

¹ Dr. Priestley, who was present, says that “ at the sallies of Mr. Wedderburn's sarcastic wit, all the members of the Council, the President himself (Lord Gower) not excepted, frequently laughed outright; no one of them behaving with decent gravity, except Lord North.”

² Of this notorious invective the following was the conclusion : “ Amidst these tranquil events, here is a man who, with the utmost insensibility of remorse, stands up and avows himself the author of all. I can compare him only to Zanga, in Dr. Young's ‘ Revenge ’ :—

— ‘ Know, then, ’twas I—
I forged the letter—I dispos'd the picture—
I hated—I despis'd—and I destroy.’

I ask, my Lords, whether the revengeful temper attributed to the bloody African is not surpassed by the coolness and apathy of the wily American ? ”

³ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. IV., pp. 222-3.

The hearing began by reading my letter to Lord Dartmouth, enclosing the petition, then the petition itself, the resolves, and lastly the letters, the Solicitor-General making no objections, nor asking any of the questions he had talked of at the preceding Board. Our counsel then opened the matter, upon their general plan, and acquitted themselves very handsomely ; only Mr. Dunning, having a disorder on his lungs, that weakened his voice exceedingly, was not so perfectly heard as one could have wished. The Solicitor-General then went into what he called a history of the province for the last ten years, and bestowed plenty of abuse upon it, mingled with encomium on the Governors. But the favorite part of his discourse was levelled at your agent, who stood there the butt of his invective ribaldry for near an hour, not a single Lord adverting to the impropriety and indecency of treating a public messenger in so ignominious a manner, who was present only as the person delivering your petition, with the consideration of which no part of *his* conduct had any concern. If he had done a wrong, in obtaining and transmitting the letters, that was not the tribunal where he was to be accused and tried. The cause was already before the Chancellor. Not one of their lordships checked and recalled the orator to the business before them, but, on the contrary, a very few excepted, they seemed to enjoy highly the entertainment, and frequently burst out in loud applauses. This part of his speech was thought so good that they have since printed it, in order to defame me everywhere, and particularly to destroy my reputation on your side of the water ; but the grosser parts of the abuse are omitted, appearing, I suppose, in their own eyes, too foul to be seen on paper ; so that the speech, compared to what it was, is now perfectly decent. . . .

Their lordships' Report, which I send you, is dated the same day. It contains a severe censure, as you will see, on the petition and the petitioners, and, as I think, a very unfair conclusion from my silence,

that the charge of surreptitiously obtaining the letters was a true one ; though the solicitor, as appears in the printed speech, had acquainted them that that matter was before the Chancellor ; and my counsel had stated the impropriety of my answering there to charges then trying in another court. In truth, I came by them honorably, and my intention in sending them was virtuous, if an endeavour to lessen the breach between two States of the same empire be such, by showing that the injuries complained of by one of them did not proceed from the other, but from traitors among themselves.

After this the result of the Privy Council inquiry regarding the petition was a foregone conclusion. The report, approved by the King, was to the effect “ that the petition was founded upon resolutions formed upon false and erroneous allegations, and calculated only for the seditious purposes of keeping up a spirit of clamour and discontent in the Provinces.” It was consequently dismissed. On the following day Franklin was removed from his office of Deputy Postmaster-General for America, and for a time thought of returning home, but was induced by his friends to await the result of the Continental Congress which his countrymen were now convening to discuss their grievances together :

My situation here [he wrote] is thought by many to be a little hazardous ; for if, by some accident, the troops and people of New England should come to blows, I should probably be taken up ; the Ministerial people affecting everywhere to represent me as the cause of all the misunderstanding ; and I have been frequently cautioned to secure my papers, and by some advised to withdraw. But I venture to stay, in compliance with the wish of others, till the result of the Congress arrives, since they suppose my being here might on that occasion be of use ; and I confide in my innocence, that the worst which can happen to me will be an imprisonment upon suspicion, though that is a thing I should much desire to avoid, as it

may be expensive and vexatious, as well as dangerous to my health.¹

While the King and his Privy Council were discussing the offending petition from Massachusetts, and its still more offending agent, in the closing month of 1773, Boston was taking another step along the path which was now leading unmistakably to open revolt. It was characteristic of the whole course of events that Boston's historic tea-party was due as much to misunderstanding as to clumsy administration. Under Lord North's Bill for the relief of the East India Company, introduced in 1772 and extended in 1773, the Company was empowered to export tea direct to America, instead of being obliged, as hitherto, to pass it through an English port and the hands of English merchants.

This was primarily intended, of course, to benefit the East India Company, but since it meant a reduction of the duty in America from a shilling to threepence a pound, making the price of tea correspondingly cheaper, it was also something of a concession to the colonists. This, however, touched the pocket of the American tea merchant, who, like the English middle-man, was deprived of his profits by a monopoly which permitted the East India Company to be its own exporter to its own branches in the colonies ; and the colonial merchants, who hitherto as a class had kept aloof from the popular clamour inspired by Samuel Adams, now took the lead in resistance. "Ruin the merchants," they cried, "and other industries will be similarly crippled." They left nothing undone to persuade the public that the new measure was only an insidious plot to win by treachery what Parliament could not achieve by open dealing. When, therefore, the East India Company, threatened by bankruptcy, with seventeen millions of pounds of unsold tea in its warehouses, obtained this permission to send cargoes of tea at a venture to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charlestown, the colonists took alarm at once.

It was the opportunity which Samuel Adams foresaw in the approaching tea-chests that hastened his proposals for the new Continental Congress which was to keep Franklin

¹ Franklin's Works. Edited by Sparks.

some months longer in England. Franklin himself had suggested such a congress in a letter to Speaker Cushing in July, but the idea had been simmering in Adams's mind all through the year. “ As I have long contemplated the subject with fixed attention,” he wrote over his signature as “ Observation ” in the *Boston Gazette* on September 27, 1773, “ I beg leave to offer a proposal to my fellow-countrymen, namely, that a CONGRESS OF AMERICAN STATES be assembled as soon as possible ; draw up a Bill of Rights, and publish it to the world ; choose an ambassador to reside at the British Court to act for the United Colonies ; appoint where the Congress shall annually meet, and how it may be summoned upon any extraordinary occasion. . . . ” To this he added on October 11 : “ The question will be asked—How shall the colonies force their oppressors to proper terms ? This question has been often answered by our politicians, namely, ‘ Form an Independent State,’ ‘ An American Commonwealth.’ This plan has been proposed, and I can't find that any other is likely to answer the great purpose of preserving our liberties.” Yet Samuel Adams at the same time could pretend, in the document which he drew up for the signature of the tamer-spirited Cushing—to be sent round to all the sister colonies—that they were “ far from desiring that the connexion between Britain and America should be broken.”

Esto perpetua is our ardent wish [continued this manifesto], but upon the terms only of equal liberty. If we cannot establish an agreement upon these terms, let us leave it to another and a wiser generation. But it may be worth consideration that the work is more likely to be well done at a time when the ideas of liberty and its importance are strong in men's minds. There is danger that these ideas may grow faint and languid. Our posterity may be accustomed to bear the yoke, and being inured to servility, they may even bow the shoulder to the burden.

This ever present peril of flagging enthusiasm and the temptation to submit when the tea which all Americans loved should arrive at ninepence a pound less than it had been

before impelled the leader, with the ready help of the injured tea merchants, to leave no stone unturned to prevent the coming cargoes from being landed. Philadelphia's first step was to force the agents of the East India Company to resign, and the tea-ship, on its arrival, to turn about and sail for England. At New York and Charlestown the tea was landed—or such of it as was permitted to be landed—only to lie unsold until it rotted.

At Boston a demonstration was organised at Liberty Tree for November 3, at which the consignees were summoned to send in their resignations and swear to reship the tea on its arrival. The consignees, who had not been too wisely chosen by the East India Company, including two sons of the unpopular Governor Hutchinson, declined to appear, and the crowd was with difficulty restrained from wreaking similar vengeance to that which characterised the Stamp Act riots. A destructive attack was made on the house of one of the consignees a few days later, but the real revenge was reserved for the memorable night of December 16, 1773, eighteen days after the arrival in the harbour of the *Dartmouth*, the first of the tea-ships. Committees of correspondence throughout the province had pledged themselves to resist the landing and sale of the tea at all costs, as something “more to be dreaded than plague and pestilence”—to quote from one of the joint letters despatched by Samuel Adams—and mysterious meetings were held at which the plans were organised for the famous tea-party.

Strict guard was kept night and day in order to prevent the tea-ships—three of these arrived in due course—from landing their cargoes. Town meetings threatened the ship-owners with dire punishment if they dared to defy the patriots. Rotch, the Quaker owner of the *Dartmouth*, was willing to reship his cargo to London, but legal technicality disallowed such a solution. No ship, having once entered the harbour, could leave it until the customs duty had been paid; and the goods had to be landed before this could be done—the very thing which the Sons of Liberty had pledged themselves to prevent. Hutchinson alone could have surmounted the difficulty by a special permit overriding the regulations, but this he declined to do on the ground that

he was bound to carry out the revenue laws by his oath of office. So the matter hurried to its crisis on December 16, the last day before the *Dartmouth*, according to law, would be allowed to remain in harbour without being “ entered.” On the following day the revenue officers’ duty would be to confiscate the cargo and land it under the protection of the men and guns of his Majesty’s fleet. Anticipating some dramatic stroke, the colonists early on the sixteenth, swarmed into Boston from all the surrounding towns, swelling the crowd at the great demonstration called to discuss what final steps should be taken, until it was estimated that some 7,000 determined men filled the old South Meeting House and its neighbourhood.

The critical moment arrived in the evening when Quaker Rotch brought the news that Hutchinson once and for all declined to grant a permit for the vessels to leave until they had been formally “ entered.” Thereupon Samuel Adams solemnly declared : “ This meeting can do no more to save the country ” ; someone, disguised as a Mohawk Indian, gave a war-whoop from the gallery, and a band of other “ Mohawks,” variously estimated at from two or three score to about 200, dashed off from outside the building to Griffin’s Wharf, obviously having waited for the given signal. It was now dark. No one interfered as the “ Indians ” stole silently to the tea-ships at anchor in the harbour, and having taken possession without opposition, proceeded to throw their cargoes into the water. All told, 342 chests were burst open and emptied in this way ; a loss, according to Lord Mahon’s valuation, of £18,000.

The Tea-party over, the “ Mohawks ” marched back in triumph through the streets, to the tune of the drum and fife, while “ those who were from the country,” to quote from the *Massachusetts Gazette*, “ went home with a merry heart.” The story is told how the procession passed Admiral Montagu, who, watching from a loyalist’s window, hailed the passers-by with the words : “ Well, boys, you’ve had a fine, pleasant evening for your Indian caper ; but, mind, you’ve got to pay the fiddler yet.” “ All right, Squire,” shouted one of the leaders, John Pitts, in reply, “ just come out here, if you please, and we’ll settle the bill

in two minutes ! " Admiral Montagu had good reason for saying that " British Acts of Parliament will never go down in America unless forced by the point of the sword." ¹ On the following day news of the Tea-party was sent to all the sister colonies by the Committee of Correspondence to the following effect :

Gentlemen,

We beg to inform you in great haste that every chest of tea on board the three ships in this town was destroyed the last evening without the least injury to the vessels or any other property. Our enemies must acknowledge that these people have acted upon pure and upright principle.

Samuel Adams, from whose autograph the above is copied, in his Life by Professor Hosmer, could hardly have expected that his enemies would acknowledge anything of the sort. Friends and foes alike in England regretted the occurrence ; but not many saw its deep significance so clearly as did Horace Walpole :

HORACE WALPOLE TO HORACE MANN.

[*Walpole's Letters.*]

February 2, 1774.

We have no news public or private ; but there is an ostrich egg laid in America, where the Bostonians have canted three hundred chests of tea into the ocean, for they will not drink tea with our Parliament. My understanding is so narrow, and was confined so long to the little meridian of England, that at this late hour of life it cannot extend itself to such huge objects as East and West Indies, though everybody else is acquainted with those continents as well as with the map of Great Britain. Lord Chatham talked of conquering America in Germany ; I believe England will be conquered some day or other in New England or Bengal. I think I have heard of such a form in law, as such an one of the parish of St.

¹ " Dartmouth Manuscripts," Historical Manuscripts Commission, Vol. II., p. 156.

Martin's-in-the-Fields in Asia. St. Martin's parish literally reaches now to the other end of the globe, and we may be undone a twelvemonth before we hear a word of the matter—which is not convenient, and a little drawback on being masters of dominions a thousand times bigger than ourselves. Well! I suppose, some time or other, some learned Jesuit Needham will find out that Indostan was peopled by a colony from Cripplegate or St. Mary Axe, which will compensate for a thousand misfortunes. . . .

The King and his Ministers—and the Opposition leaders as well, for that matter—failed to grasp the fact that the Boston Tea-party was not merely a local outrage, but the first decisive step towards a revolution in which the whole continent was involved. General Gage, lately returned from New York, assured the King that four regiments would soon restore the Bostonians to their senses :

GEORGE III. TO LORD NORTH.

[“ *Correspondence of George III. with Lord North.*”]

QUEEN'S HOUSE, February 4, 1774.

Lord North,

Since you left me this day, I have seen Lieutenant-General Gage, who came to express his readiness, though so lately come from America, to return at a day's notice, if the conduct of the colonies should induce the directing coercive measures. His language was very consonant to his character of an honest determined man. He says they will be lions, whilst we are lambs ; but, if we take the resolute part, they will undoubtedly prove very meek. He thinks the four regiments intended to relieve as many regiments in America, if sent to Boston, are sufficient to prevent any disturbance. I wish you would see him, and hear his ideas as to the mode of compelling Boston to submit to whatever may be thought necessary ; indeed, all men seem now to feel that the fatal compliance in 1766 has encouraged the Americans annually to increase in their pretensions to that thorough independency which one State has of

another, but which is quite subversive of the obedience which a colony owes to its Mother Country.

Inspired by such advice as the above, North proceeded to introduce his harsh series of punitive measures, beginning with the Boston Port Bill. This was announced by Arthur Lee, who was associated with Franklin as Agent of the Massachusetts Assembly in London, to his brother, one of New England's most ardent patriots. Lee's astute advice is worthy of Franklin himself :

ARTHUR LEE TO RICHARD H. LEE.

[*"American Archives."*]

LONDON, March 18, 1774.

Dear Brother,

The affairs of America are now become very serious ; the Ministry are determined to put your spirit to the proof. Boston is their first object. On Monday the 14th, it was ordered in the House of Commons, that leave be given to bring in a Bill " for the immediate removal of the officers concerned in the collection and management of his Majesty's duties of Customs from the town of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in North America ; and to discontinue the landing and discharging, lading and shipping of goods, wares and merchandise, at the said town of Boston, or within the harbour thereof."

If the colonies in general permit this to pass unnoticed, a precedent will be established for humbling them by degrees, until all opposition to arbitrary power is subdued. The manner, however, in which you should meet this violent act should be well weighed. The proceedings of the colonies, in consequence of it, will be read and regarded as manifestos. Great care, therefore, should be taken to word them unexceptionally and plausibly. They should be prefaced with the strongest professions of respect and attachment to this country ; of reluctance to enter into any dispute with her ; of the readiness you have always shown, and still wish to show, of contributing according to your ability, and in a

constitutional way, to her support ; and of your determination to undergo every extremity rather than submit to be enslaved. These things tell much in your favour with moderate men, and with Europe, to whose interposition America may yet owe her salvation, should the contest be serious and lasting. In short, as we are the weaker, it becomes us to be *suaviter in modo*, however we may be determined to act *fortiter in re*. There is a persuasion here that America will see, without interposition, the ruin of Boston. It is of the last importance to the general cause, that your conduct should prove this opinion erroneous. If once it is perceived that you may be attacked and destroyed by piecemeal, *actum est*, every part will in its turn feel the vengeance which it would not unite to repel, and a general slavery or ruin must ensue. The colonies should never forget Lord North's declaration in the House of Commons, that he would not listen to the complaints of America until she was at his feet. The character of Lord North, and the consideration of what surprising things he has effected towards enslaving his own country, make me, I own, tremble for yours. Plausible, deep, and treacherous, like his master, he has no passions to divert him, no pursuits of pleasure to withdraw him, from the accursed design of deliberately destroying the liberties of his country. A perfect adept in the arts of corruption, and indefatigable in the application of them, he effects great ends by means almost magical, because they are unseen. In four years he has overcome the most formidable opposition in this country, from which the Duke of Grafton fled with horror. At the same time he has effectually enslaved the East India Company, and made the vast revenue and territory of India, in effect, a royal patronage. Flushed with these successes, he now attacks America ; and certainly, if we are not firm and united, he will triumph in the same manner over us. In my opinion, a general resolution of the colonies to break off all commercial

intercourse with this country, until they are secured in their liberties, is the only advisable and sure mode of defence. To execute such a resolution would be irksome at first, but you would be amply repaid, not only in saving your money, and becoming independent of these petty tyrants, the merchants, but in securing your general liberties.

You are, however, more capable of judging what is proper and practicable. My great wish is to see you firm and united. Adieu.

Yours affectionately,
ARTHUR LEE.

Chatham, like Walpole, saw that the fate of England was at stake, but, staunch upholder as he was of England's supremacy, as well as resolute for justice to the colonies, he looked in vain for a happy issue out of "this unhappy business." It was not until towards the end of the session that he took part in the long-drawn-out American debates, and his voice proved powerless against the overwhelming majority of the King's friends :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE EARL
OF SHELburnE.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

BURTON PYNSENT, *March 20, 1774.*

My dear Lord,

It is most true that I am extremely anxious about the measures now depending, with regard to America, and I consider the fate of Old England as being at stake, not less than that of the New. The violence committed upon the tea-cargo is certainly criminal; nor would it be real kindness to the Americans to adopt their passions and wild pretensions, where they manifestly violate the most indispensable ties of civil society. Boston, therefore, appears to me to owe reparation for such a destruction of the property of the East India Company.¹

¹ Franklin advised the payment of compensation to the East India Company as a wise thing for the Bostonians to do, but Samuel Adams scorned the idea. "Franklin might be a great philosopher," he declared, "but he was a bungling politician."

This is, to my mind, clear and evident ; but, I confess, it is equally clear to me, that in pursuing this just object, government may become unjust ; if they attempt to blend the enforcement of general declared rights of the British Parliament (which I must for ever treat as rights in theory only) with a due satisfaction for a tumultuous act of a very criminal nature. The methods, too, proposed, by way of coercion, appear to me too severe, as well as highly exceptionable in order of time : for reparation ought first to be demanded in a solemn manner, and refused by the town and magistracy of Boston, before such a Bill of Pains and Penalties can be called just.

The whole of this unhappy business is beset with dangers of the most complicated and lasting nature ; and the point of true wisdom for the Mother Country seems to be in such nice and exact limits (accurately distinguished, and embraced, with a large and generous moderation of spirit), as narrow, short-sighted Councils of State, or overheated popular debates, are not likely to hit. Perhaps a fatal desire to take advantage of this guilty tumult of the Bostonians, in order to crush the spirit of liberty among the Americans in general, has taken possession of the heart of government. If that mad and cruel measure should be pushed, one need not be a prophet to say, England has seen her best days. Boston, I hope and believe, would make reparation, for a heinous wrong, in the tea-cargo ; but to consent quietly to have no right over their own purse, I conceive the people of America will never be brought to do. Laws of navigation and trade, for regulation not for revenue, I should hope and believe, America once at ease about internal taxation, would also acquiesce under, and friendly intercourse be again opened ; without which, we, not they, shall be undone. I shall never end this extensive and interesting subject : I will, therefore, my dear Lord, close my long epistle at present, by two old lines, I believe, of Spenser ; who says, not very poetically,

but so very truly, that our wise rulers might do well to bear them in mind : this sage dictum is—

“ Who once have missed the right way,
The further they do go, the further they do stray.”

I am glad to hear Lord North's tone was of a moderate cast, and I place a degree of hope in the candour and right principles of Lord Dartmouth. But where is the casting voice in this great business ? . . . I make no doubt that Colonel Barré will have shone, on Friday last. He takes the only way *to cover* the Americans effectually, by not putting their defence in the weak ground. He is too able a commander to fall into such an error. For this time, I will at last take my leave, with assuring you, that I am unalterably, etc.,

CHATHAM.

Barré, at first, in point of fact, astounded his friends by expressing his entire approval of the Boston Port Bill. “ I think Boston ought to be punished,” he declared. “ She is your eldest son ”—a bull which, as Professor Hosmer says, “ causes one almost to believe that the good veteran had fortified himself for his forensic bout with a nip of Dutch courage.” In any case he was heart and soul with Burke in his opposition to the Ministry a fortnight later. North, however, with his majority of puppets, carried the Bill without difficulty. George III. at once sent his congratulations to his Prime Minister :

The feebleness and futility of the Opposition to the Boston Port Bill shows the rectitude of the measure, and want of matter, not of goodwill, has been the cause of its having met with so little trouble.¹

Other retaliatory measures were passed during the same session, changing the constitution of Massachusetts ; prohibiting the free town meetings ; vesting the appointment of Judges, the Members of the Council, the Justices of the Peace,

¹ “ Correspondence of George III. with Lord North.”

and other officials, in the Crown ; consolidating the civil and military authority by the appointment of a new Governor in General Gage, with an armed force again in the town of Boston ; and decreeing that persons indicted for acts of violence and armed resistance might be sent to England for trial. Puritan feeling in America was also outraged by the new Quebec Act, the provisions of which guaranteed religious equality to the French population, while extending their province and converting it into a Crown Colony.

The Quebec Act, though passed nearly at the same time, had nothing to do with the Boston Tea-party, having been decided upon years previously in order to right the wrong done to French-Canadians by the hurried Proclamation of 1763. In his exhaustive and impartial study of “ The Causes of the War of Independence ” (1922) Professor Van Tyne, of the University of Michigan, acknowledges this Act as

“ a statesmanlike measure which may well soften the judgment of history on Lord North, Lord Mansfield, Wedderburn, and even the much-maligned George III. The King as he signed the Bill declared it was founded ‘ on the clearest principles of justice and humanity.’ In granting the French colonists the free exercise of their religion the British Parliament made a commendable step forward in the progress of religious toleration. . . . The reaction of New England to this phase of the Quebec Act was not creditable to those men whose ancestors had fled to the wilderness that they might worship as they chose.”

“ No popery ” became a common device on the banners borne by Puritan crowds. Lurid pictures were conjured up, in the words of Judge Drayton, of South Carolina, of “ the flames which are lighted, blown up, and fed with blood by the Roman Catholic doctrines.” Religious passions thus stirred up played no small part in the development of the dispute with the Motherland.

Meanwhile Hutchinson had obtained leave to relinquish his onerous burden, but was delayed in his departure for England by the death of broken-hearted Oliver, who was ill when the storm burst upon the loyal heads of his brother-in-law and himself over their letters to Whately, and did not long survive the shock. Merciless unto death, the mob gave three cheers as Oliver’s body was lowered into his grave. Someone was even heard to say that they hoped soon to render the same office to the Governor himself. Such was the temper

of the times when General Gage received his commission as Hutchinson's successor :

THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH TO GENERAL GAGE.

[*"American Archives."*]

WHITEHALL, April 9, 1774.

The King having thought fit that you should return immediately to your command in North America, and that you should proceed directly to Boston, on board his Majesty's ship *Lively*, now lying at Plymouth, ready to sail with the first fair wind, I send you herewith, by his Majesty's command, a commission under the Great Seal, appointing you Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of his Majesty's Province of Massachusetts Bay, together with such instructions as have been usually given to Governors of that province, for their guidance in the exercise of the ordinary and more permanent powers and authorities incident to that command.

What is further necessary for your direction in the present state of disorder and commotion within that province, and for enabling you to carry into execution the measures that have been, and probably will be adopted, for reducing it to a state of obedience to lawful authority, is of a more delicate and important nature, and requires more precise and particular instructions.

With this letter you will receive an Act of Parliament, passed in the present session, for discontinuing the loading and unloading of goods and merchandise at the town and within the harbour of Boston ; and also a Minute of the Treasury Board, containing the substance of such instructions as their lordships have thought fit to give to their officers in consequence thereof ; and it is the King's command that you do give them all proper and necessary assistance and support in the execution thereof.

To this end it will be expedient that you do, immediately upon your arrival, and as soon as your commission has been read and published, in the

usual form, appoint a meeting, either at the town or within the castle (as circumstances shall point out), with the Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's ships, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Commissioners of the Customs, the Chief Justice, and the Secretary of the province, in order to consider what steps it may be proper to take for carrying the Act into execution, and for enforcing, if necessary, a due obedience thereto; and if Mr. Hutchinson should not be come away, in consequence of the leave he has obtained for that purpose, his advice and assistance, in this case, as well as in the execution of every other part of your instructions, will be of very great use and advantage to you.

His Majesty trusts that no opposition will, or can, with any effect, be made to the carrying the law into execution, nor any violence or insult offered to those to whom the execution of it is entrusted. Should it happen otherwise, your authority as the first magistrate, combined with the command over the King's troops, will, it is hoped, enable you to meet every opposition, and fully to preserve the public peace by employing those troops with effect, should the madness of the people, on the one hand, or the timidity or want of strength of the peace officers on the other hand, make it necessary to have recourse to their assistance. The King trusts, however, that such necessity will not occur, and commands me to say, that it will be your duty to use every endeavour to avoid it; to quiet the minds of the people: to remove their prejudices, and, by mild and gentle persuasion, to induce such a submission on their part, to this law, and such a proper compliance with the just requisitions it contains, as may give full scope to his Majesty's clemency, and enable his Majesty to exercise the discretionary power given him by the Act, of again restoring to the town of Boston those commercial privileges and advantages which it hath so long enjoyed, and which have raised it to its present state of opulence and importance.

At the same time, the sovereignty of the King, in this Parliament, over the colonies, requires a full and absolute submission; and his Majesty's dignity demands that until that submission be made the town of Boston, where so much anarchy and confusion have prevailed, should cease to be the place of the residence of his Governor, or of any other officer of government, who is not obliged by law to perform his functions there. It is, therefore, his Majesty's further pleasure, that so soon as the law for discontinuing the port shall have taken place, and every step has been pursued that is necessary to ensure the execution of it, you do make the town of Salem the place of your residence; that you do require all officers (not included in the above exception) to attend you there; and that the General Court, and all other courts and offices which are not by law fixed at Boston, be appointed and held at Salem, until his Majesty, satisfied on your representation, that the laws of this kingdom will be duly observed, and government be again administered at the town of Boston, without opposition, shall have signified his royal will and pleasure for the return of his Governor to, and for holding of the General Court at that town.

The proceedings of the body of the people at the town of Boston, in the months of November and December last, were of such a nature and criminality as to have fixed a deep degree of guilt upon those who were the principal ringleaders and abettors of those proceedings, and the measures proper to be taken for inducing the punishment of such guilt, become a very necessary part of the present consideration, relative to the State of the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The King considers the punishment of these offenders as a very necessary and essential example to others, of the ill-consequences that must follow from such an open and arbitrary usurpation as tend to the subversion of all government, and the rendering civil liberty unsafe and precarious; and his

Majesty's subjects in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in general cannot give a better test of their love of justice, and respect for the Constitution, than in their zealous endeavours to render effectual a due prosecution of such offenders. If, however, the prejudices of the people should appear to you to be such as would in all probability prevent a conviction, however clear and full the evidence might be, in that case it would be better to desist from prosecution, seeing that an ineffectual attempt would only be a triumph to the faction, and disgraceful to government.

The foregoing is all that I have at present in command from the King to say to you. I need not suggest to you the very great advantage that will result from your obtaining a just and perfect knowledge of the characters, inclinations and tempers of the principal people in the colony ; such information must, of necessity, be of great benefit, and your own discretion will point out to you the use that is to be made of it. The last advices from Boston are of a nature to leave but little room to hope that order and obedience are soon likely to take the place of anarchy and usurpation. His Majesty, however, confides in your fortitude and discretion, and doubts not that all other officers, civil and military, animated by your example, will exert themselves in such a manner, in support of the Constitution, and for enforcing obedience to the laws, as will recommend them to his Majesty's royal grace and favour.

The letter which follows shows how ill-formed, as usual, was the Ministry, when led to believe that order and obedience were soon likely to take the place of anarchy and usurpation :

SAMUEL ADAMS TO ARTHUR LEE.

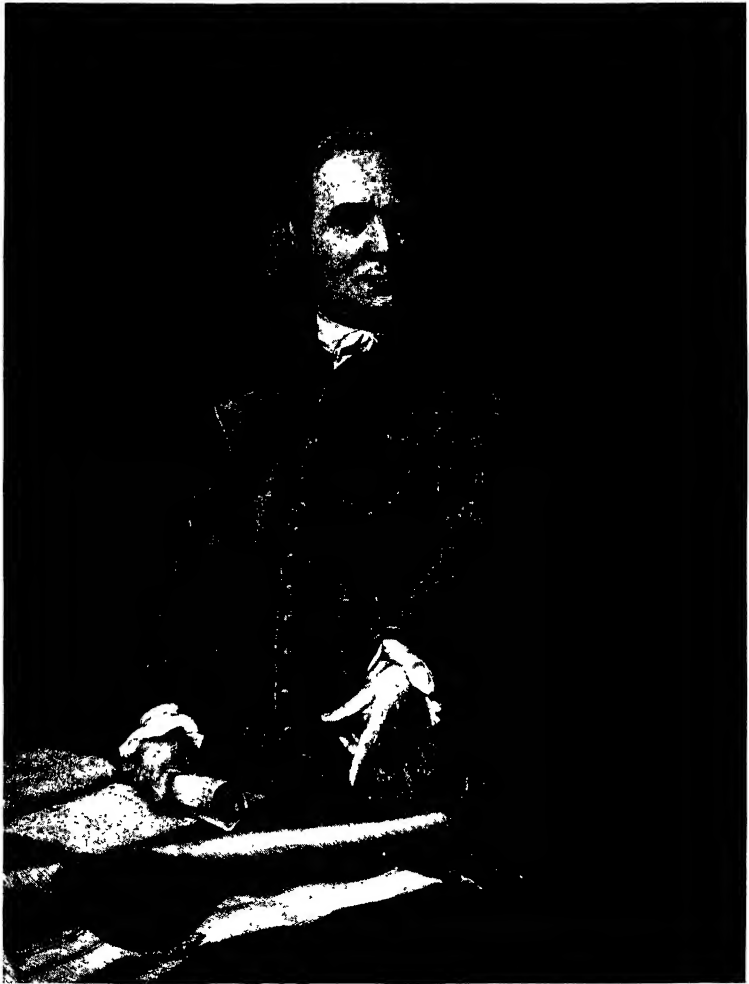
[*" American Archives."*]

BOSTON, May 18, 1774.

My dear Sir,

The edict of the British Parliament, commonly called the Boston Port Act, came safely to my hand. For flagrant injustice and barbarity, one might

search in vain among the archives of Constantinople to find a match for it. But what else could have been expected from a Parliament too long under the dictates and control of an Administration which seems to be totally lost to all sense and feeling of morality, and governed by passion, cruelty and revenge. For us to reason against such an Act would be idleness. Our business is to find means to evade its malignant design. The inhabitants view it, not with astonishment, but with indignation. They discover the utmost contempt of the framers of it; while they are yet disposed to consider the body of the nation (though represented by such a Parliament) in the character they have sustained heretofore, humane and generous. They resent the behaviour of the merchants in London: those, I mean, who receive their bread from them, in infamously deserting their cause at the time of extremity. They can easily believe, that the industrious manufacturers, whose time is wholly spent in their various employments, are misled and imposed upon by such miscreants as have ungratefully devoted themselves to an abandoned Ministry, not regarding the ruin of those who have been their best benefactors. But the inhabitants of this town must and will look to their own safety, which they see does not consist in a servile compliance with the ignominious terms of this barbarous edict. Though the means of preserving their liberties should distress, and even ruin the British manufacturers, they are resolved (but with reluctance) to try the experiment. To this they are impelled by motives of self-preservation. They feel humanely for those who must suffer, but being innocent, are not the objects of their revenge. They have already called upon their sister colonies, (as you will see by the enclosed note,) who not only feel for them as fellow-citizens, but look upon them as suffering the stroke of Ministerial vengeance in the common cause of America; that cause which the colonists have pledged themselves to each other not



SAMUEL ADAMS

From a wood-engraving after the portrait painted by Copley in 1773

to give up. In the meantime, I trust in God this devoted town will sustain the shock with dignity ; and, supported by their brethren, will gloriously defeat the designs of their common enemies. Calmness, courage, and unanimity prevail. While they are resolved not tamely to submit, they will, by refraining from any acts of violence, avoid the snare that they discover to be laid for them, by posting regiments so near them. I heartily thank you for your spirited exertions. Use means for the preservation of your health. Our warmest gratitude is due to Lords Camden and Shelburne. Our dependence is upon the wisdom of the few of the British nobility. We suspect studied insult in the appointment of the person who is Commander-in-Chief of the troops in America to be our Governor ; and I think there appears to be in it more than a design to insult upon any specious pretence. We will endeavour, by circumspection and sound prudence, to frustrate the diabolical designs of our enemies.

I have written in haste, and am, affectionately,
your friend

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Samuel Adams knew what he was saying when he spoke of the sufferings entailed in industrial England by the continuance of the non-importation agreement, now working more stringently and effectively than ever :

A NORWICH MERCHANT TO A CORRESPONDENT
IN NEW YORK.

[“ *American Archives.*”]

NORWICH (ENGLAND), June 13, 1774.

What a scene of misery and distress are the pernicious measures of Administration disclosing in this city ! The cries of thousands of poor journeymen weavers, and the clamour of their unemployed masters, with all their numerous dependants of combers, dyers, hot-pressers, etc., will ere long reach the ears of the weak, tyrannic Lord that occasioned them, and make his name and memory as odious in

Europe as in America. Every manufacturer in the home trade, who, at this time of the year, used to receive prodigious orders for coarse camblets, callimancoes, and black and white crapes, from the warehouses in London for the colonies, are now entirely at a stand ; and when business in the foreign houses decline, our workhouses will be crowded with paupers, and the poor rates become insupportably high, and numberless families become destitute of bread. It is not many months since a petition was presented to Parliament, by our worthy members, Sir Harbord Harbord, and Edward Bacon, Esquire, setting forth the decay of trade, and the hardships we labour under. But alas ! how does a Prime Minister regard the misfortunes he heaps upon others. Instead of protecting and encouraging our commerce, he has taken the most direct means to diminish and destroy it ; and for what ? To execute his avowed and secret designs, and to gratify his pride, his folly, and his resentment. Because a licentious rabble in Boston destroyed a dutied article, which one of the wisest men in this nation has proved ought not to have been taxed, and which would not have been destroyed if the ships that carried it had not obstinately persisted in landing it ; for that reason, I say, a whole city, a whole province, must suffer all the dreadful effects of Ministerial vengeance. The worthy magistrate, the innocent merchant, the honest tradesman, the well-disposed poor, all, all must be treated with the most unexampled, the most diabolical rigour, for the outrage of a few ; have, like the City of London, their humble petitions and just remonstrances ridiculed and disregarded ; their Charter violated ; their ports blocked up ; their trade removed ; their inhabitants dragged three thousand miles for trial ; and to complete the tragedy and their slavery, a military Governor and troops sent over to enforce the Ministerial mandate. Excellent measures these to stir up a civil war at home ; compel the exasperated Americans to take up arms, and to ruin the trade of the Mother

Country. But whatever gratification such measures may afford to a wrong-headed deluded Minister, they are highly offensive to unemployed and impoverished manufacturers, whose business is their dependence and support, and who are too sensible of the loss, not to curse those who would deprive them and their posterity of it. Happy is it for Lord North that he is not a tradesman, lamenting for orders, and distressed for remittances. Unhappy for him that the Kingdom at large condemn his American measures, and are ashamed of his conduct. In a word, pensioners may flatter, and levées may applaud ; but it is too clear, that, unless he conciliate the esteem of the colonies by a repeal of the cruel destructive laws he has framed, and restore the trade he has taken away, that he will kindle a flame he will find himself unable to quench, and load himself with the execrations not only of innumerable poor that may be deprived of employment in the manufactories of this city, Birmingham, Sheffield and Yorkshire, but those of every sensible and spirited person in the Kingdom.

The wide difference of opinion on the subject in England, as in America, may be judged by a comparison of the foregoing letter with the following righteous outburst from a colonist recently landed in the Mother Country to a friend at home. The writer's name is not given in the “ American Archives ” from which it is taken, but obviously he was of the stuff of which most American patriots were made—sons of sires of the strongest English type, who embodied to the full the spirit of colonial independence, and scorned the prevailing conditions seen in the Motherland, in a period of abnormal reaction, and under a Government of second and third-class politicians :

— TO A FRIEND IN PHILADELPHIA.

[“ *American Archives.*”]

BRISTOL, July 20, 1774.

Surrounded as I am by a thousand different businesses, still I cannot resist the strong inclination I

feel to tell you that I am alive and well once more in Old England. Formerly I loved the country and people, but now both appear odious to me. Their conduct towards the Americans is horrid, cruel and detestable. They call ye all thieves, pirates, and rebels ; for which, in return, I make no scruple to call them knaves, scoundrels, and spiritless slaves. Every day I am in the most furious quarrels in vindication of America, that ever you saw. I wish to God that you had a few more friends in this city. I shall, through my zealous attachment, lose or endanger my election ; but no matter. They already cry, " No American " ; " No Bill-of-Rights-man." My acquaintance tell me I am too warm ; but do you tell me, my friend, who that is made up of American flesh and blood, can sit calm and composed to hear his native country, with his dearest connections, calumniated, belied, and reprobated ? No ! By Heaven and earth, I swear I never will silently put up with such ill-usage, while I have breath to speak, or hands to fight.

I am just returned from London. It is with a degree of pleasure I can assure you many of the great men are ashamed of what they have done, seriously dreading the associations and resentment of the Virginians in particular. The revenue arising from the duties on tobacco is mortgaged ; and a stop to their exportations would make a glorious confusion among their High Mightinesses. When I left America I recommended moderation, but with concern I find that conduct will not do. Resentment must show itself ; for our Ministers wish themselves well out of it. Firmness on the part of the Americans will ensure them the victory. Now is the crisis—the important crisis of your whole lives ; you can lose nothing by a patriotic stand ; you may gain everything. The people of this country are sunk in luxury, and wish only to get their hands into the purses of Americans to support them in it. They are totally indifferent about liberty, and lost to every sense of

honour or virtue. Open corruption is connived at and approved ; oppression, black as hell, darkens the annals of the present times ; and Britons seem happy in their supine folly and base vassalage.

If once the Americans submit, I foresee a train of evils ready to light upon them. Taxes, impositions, and oppressions, without moderation or end. Now is the appointed time to struggle like men for your dear inheritance ; and there can be no doubt, but Providence and a new Parliament will do you ample justice. I will weary Heaven with my prayers for your success. My sincere good wishes attend you and all the rest of my worthy countrymen at Philadelphia.

America had lately alienated a host of friends in this country by her rebellious temper, the Boston Tea-party in particular having raised a correspondingly high spirit of resentment at home. England, it must be remembered, had lately been through a protracted, if glorious struggle. She had made tremendous sacrifices, and was now, unhappily, content to vegetate, little heeding for the most part the power that was slipping into royal hands, and only annoyed that these rebellious sons of hers would not leave her in peace :

. . . In the present temper of the nation, and with the character of the present Administration [wrote Burke to Rockingham on September 16], the disorder and discontent of all America, and the more remote future mischiefs which may arise from those causes, operate as little as the division of Poland. The insensibility of the merchants of London is of a degree and kind scarcely to be conceived. Even those who are most likely to be overwhelmed by any real American confusion are amongst the most supine. The character of the Ministry either produces, or perfectly coincides with, the disposition of the public. The security of the latter does, I know, arise from an opinion of the volatile and transient nature of popular discontents ; and they have the recent and

comfortable experience that these discomforts which prevailed at home, and prevailed with no small violence, had evaporated of themselves without any exertion whatsoever on the part of Government.¹

Washington, though he disapproved of the Boston Tea-party, stoutly defended the principles which guided that action, and resented the Government's punitive measures when Bryan Fairfax, afterwards eighth and last Lord Fairfax, advised sending a petition to the King, and giving Parliament a fair opportunity of repealing their obnoxious Acts. The Fairfax family had long settled in Virginia, and Washington had urged Bryan to stand as a candidate at the approaching elections to the Legislature. Bryan declined, on the ground that since he would oppose strong measures, he could scarcely give satisfaction to the electors at that time. The following are extracts from two letters which Washington wrote in answer to his objections :

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO BRYAN FAIRFAX.

["*Washington Writings.*"]

MOUNT VERNON, July 4, 1774.

. . . As to your political sentiments, I would heartily join you in them, so far as relates to a humble and dutiful petition to the Throne, provided there was the most distant hope of success. But have we not tried this already? Have we not addressed the Lords, and remonstrated to the Commons? And to what end? Did they deign to look at our petitions? Does it not appear, as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness, that there is a regular, systematic plan formed to fix the right and practice of taxation upon us? Does not the uniform conduct of Parliament for some years past confirm this? Do not all the debates, especially those just brought to us, in the House of Commons on the side of Government, expressly declare that America must be taxed in aid of the British funds, and that she has no longer resources within herself? Is there any thing to be expected from petitioning after this? Is not the

¹ "Correspondence of Edmund Burke."

attack upon the liberty and property of the people of Boston, before restitution of the loss to the India Company was demanded, a plain and self-evident proof of what they are aiming at ? Do not the subsequent Bills (now I dare say Acts), for depriving the Massachusetts Bay of its Charter, and for transporting offenders into other colonies or to Great Britain for trial, where it is impossible from the nature of the thing that justice can be obtained, convince us that the Administration is determined to stick at nothing to carry its point ? Ought we not, then, to put our virtue and fortitude to the severest test ?

With you I think it a folly to attempt more than we can execute, as that will not only bring disgrace upon us, but weaken our cause ; yet I think we may do more than is generally believed, in respect to the non-importation scheme. As to the withholding of our remittances, that is another point, in which I own I have my doubts on several accounts, but principally on that of justice ; for I think, whilst we are accusing others of injustice, we should be just ourselves ; and how this can be, whilst we owe a considerable debt, and refuse payment of it to Great Britain, is to me inconceivable. Nothing but the last extremity, I think, can justify it. Whether this is now come, is the question. . . .

July 20, 1774.

. . . The conduct of the Boston people could not justify the rigour of their measures, unless there had been a requisition of payment and refusal of it ; nor did that conduct require an Act to deprive the Government of Massachusetts Bay of their Charter, or to exempt offenders from trial in the places where offences were committed, as there was not, nor could there be, a single instance produced to manifest the necessity of it. Are not all these things evident proofs of a fixed and uniform plan to tax us ? If we want further proofs, do not all the debates in the House of Commons serve to confirm this ? And has

not General Gage's conduct since his arrival, in stopping the address of his Council, and publishing a proclamation more becoming a Turkish bashaw, than an English Governor, declaring it treason to associate in any manner by which the commerce of Great Britain is to be affected,—has not this exhibited an unexampled testimony of the most despotic system of tyranny, that ever was practised in a free Government? In short, what further proofs are wanting to satisfy any one of the designs of the Ministry, than their own acts, which are uniform and plainly tending to the same point, nay, if I mistake not, avowedly to fix the right of taxation? What hope have we then from petitioning, when they tell us, that now or never is the time to fix the matter? Shall we, after this, whine and cry for relief, when we have already tried it in vain? Or shall we supinely sit and see one province after another fall a sacrifice to despotism?

If I were in any doubt, as to the right which the Parliament of Great Britain had to tax us without our consent, I should most heartily coincide with you in opinion, that to petition, and petition only, is the proper method to apply for relief; because we should then be asking a favour, and not claiming a right, which, by the law of nature and by our Constitution, we are, in my opinion, indubitably entitled to. I should even think it criminal to go further than this, under such an idea; but I have none such. I think the Parliament of Great Britain have no more right to put their hands into my pocket, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours; and this being already urged to them in a firm, but decent manner, by all the colonies, what reason is there to expect any thing from their justice? . . .

The Boston Port Bill had begun to take effect on June 1, 1774, eleven days after the formal entry into the town of the new military Governor, Gage, and contributions at once flowed in from all parts to the relief of those who were suffer-

ing in a common cause. Committees of Correspondence held meetings all over the province to discuss ways and means of concerted action in case of emergency. Brooklyn's gift to the threatened town was a flock of sheep, driven the whole distance of nearly a hundred miles by Israel Putnam, the Connecticut leader who had won his spurs in the French and Indian wars. Putnam, worthy forbear of a famous publishing house, also carried the following impassioned letter to Samuel Adams and his brother members of the Boston Committee :

BROOKLYN COMMITTEE TO BOSTON COMMITTEE.

[*Livingston's " Israel Putnam."*]

BROOKLYN IN POMFRET,

August 11, 1774.

Gentlemen,

With our hearts deeply impressed with the feelings of humanity towards our near and dear brethren of Boston, who are now suffering under a Ministerial, revengeful hand, and at the same time full of gratitude to the patriotic inhabitants, for the noble stand which they have made against all oppressive innovations, and with unfeigned love for all British America, who must, if Boston is subjugated, alternately fall a prey to Ministerial ambition, we send you one hundred and twenty-five sheep, as a present from the inhabitants of Brooklyn, hoping thereby you may be enabled to stand more firm (if possible) in the glorious cause in which you are embarked, notwithstanding the repeated, unheard-of daring attacks which the British Parliament are making upon the rights which you ought to enjoy as English-born subjects ; and if so, we shall of consequence contribute our mite towards the salvation of British America, which is all our ambition.

In zeal in our country's cause we are exceeded by none : but our abilities and opportunities do not admit of our being of that weight in the American scale as we would to God we were. We mean in the first place, to attempt to appease the fire (raised by

your committing the India tea to the watery element as a merited oblation to Neptune) of an ambitious and vindictive Minister, by the blood of rams and of lambs ; if that do not answer the end, we are ready to march in the van, and to sprinkle the American altars with our heart's blood, if occasion should be.

The latent seeds of destruction which are implanted in the Constitution of almost every State or Empire, have grown in England, in these last nine years, with amazing rapidity, and now are mature for harvest ; and ere long we shall see reapers flocking from all parts of Europe, who will sweep their fields with the besom of destruction. This thought occasions a cloud of melancholy to arise in the breast of every descendant from Britain, which is only dissipated by the pleasing prospect every American has before him ! Here we have an unbounded, fertile country, worth contending for with blood ! Here bribery and corruption, which are certain forebodings of a speedy dissolution, are as yet only known by names. To us, ere long, Britain's glory will be transferred, where it will shine with accumulated brilliancy.

We cannot but rejoice with you, on account of the union and firmness of the Continent. The public virtue now exhibited by the Americans exceeds all of its kind that can be produced in the annals of the Greeks and Romans. Behold them from North and South, from East to West, striving to comfort the town of Boston, both by publishing their sentiments in regard to the present tyrannical Administration, and by supporting their poor with provision, who, otherwise, in this present stagnation of business, would have reduced the opulent to a state of penury and despair in a short time.

You are held up as a spectacle to the whole world. All Christendom are longing to see the event of the American contest. And do, most notable citizens, play your part manfully, of which, we make no doubt, your names are either to be held in eternal veneration or execration. If you stand out, your names cannot

be too much applauded by all Europe, and all future generations, which is the hearty desire and wish of us, who are, with utmost respect, your obedient and humble servants,

ISRAEL PUTNAM	} Committee of Corre-
JOSEPH HOLLAND	
DANIEL TYLER, Jr.	
	spondence for the
	Parish of Brooklyn.

To Samuel Adams, Esq., Chairman to the Committee of Correspondence, Boston.

With General Gage being openly defied in Boston, and patriots arming and drilling in all directions, and the thirteen colonies preparing for a great National Congress at Philadelphia, the signs and tokens were now too ominous to be mistaken. To prevent the sale of English merchandise imported through other colonies a solemn " League and Covenant " boycotting all goods from the Mother Country, including the inland trade, was circulated and signed by the inhabitants throughout Massachusetts, notwithstanding the proclamation issued by Gage warning the people against it, and empowering the magistrates to arrest its abettors. News of this proclamation was sent by Stephen Sayre, one of the Sheriffs of London, to Chatham, who replied :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO STEPHEN SAYRE.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

HAYES, August 15, 1774.

Dear Sir,

What infatuation and cruelty to accelerate the sad moment of war ! Every step on the side of Government, in America, seems calculated to drive the Americans into open resistance, vainly hoping to crush the spirit of liberty, in that vast continent, at one successful blow ; but millions must perish there before the seeds of freedom will cease to grow and spread in so favourable a soil ; and in the meantime devoted England must sink herself, under the ruins of her own foolish and inhuman system of destruction.

I wait with extreme impatience for the next accounts ; the proclamation for seizing the cove-

protests of the selectmen, began to fortify Boston Neck with cannon from Cambridge. "The rebellious and numerous meetings of men in arms, their scandalous and ungenerous attacks upon the best characters in the province, obliging them to save themselves by flight, and their repeated but feeble threats to dispossess the troops," wrote Mackenzie, "have furnished sufficient reasons to General Gage to put the town in a formidable state of defence, about which we are now fully employed, and which will be shortly accomplished, to their great mortification."¹

Washington was attending the Continental Congress at Philadelphia—to which all the colonies, save Georgia, sent delegates—when this letter reached him, representing Virginia with the two orators, Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry, and other leaders of the province. Before answering it he made a point of discussing the subject with the delegates from Massachusetts—Samuel and John Adams, Thomas Cushing, and Robert Treat Paine; but from John Adams's account of the whole proceedings, showing how the Massachusetts delegates had been expressly warned to moderate their language and demands, in order not to frighten their more timid colleagues from the South, it is not improbable that they answered the loyal-hearted Washington with their tongues in their cheeks:

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO CAPTAIN ROBERT MACKENZIE.

[*"Washington's Writings."*]

PHILADELPHIA, October 9, 1774.

. . . Permit me with the freedom of a friend (for you know I always esteemed you) to express my sorrow, that fortune should place you in a service, that must fix curses to the latest posterity upon the contrivers, and, if success (which, by the by, is impossible) accompanies it, execrations upon all those, who have been instrumental in the execution.

I do not mean by this to insinuate, that an officer is not to discharge his duty, even when chance, not choice, has placed him in a disagreeable situation; but I conceive, when you condemn the conduct of the

¹ "*Washington's Writings.*"

Massachusetts people, you reason from effects, not causes ; otherwise you would not wonder at a people, who are every day receiving fresh proofs of a systematic assertion of an arbitrary power, deeply planned to overturn the laws and Constitution of their country, and to violate the most essential and valuable rights of mankind, being irritated, and with difficulty restrained from acts of the greatest violence and intemperance. For my own part, I confess to you candidly, that I view things in a very different point of light from the one in which you seem to consider them ; and though you are led to believe by venal men,—for such I must take the liberty of calling those new-fangled counsellors, who fly to and surround you, and all others, who, for honours or pecuniary gratifications, will lend their aid to overturn the Constitution, and introduce a system of arbitrary government,—although you are taught, I say, by discoursing with such men, to believe, that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious, setting up for independence, and what not, give me leave, my good friend, to tell you, that you are abused, grossly abused. This I advance with a degree of confidence and boldness, which may claim your belief, having better opportunities of knowing the real sentiments of the people you are among, from the leaders of them, in opposition to the present measures of the Administration, than you have from those whose business it is, not to disclose truths, but to misrepresent facts in order to justify as much as possible to the world their own conduct. Give me leave to add, and I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that Government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence ; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges, which are essential to the happiness of every free State and without which, life, liberty, and property are rendered totally insecure.

These, sir, being certain consequences, which must naturally result from the late Acts of Parliament relative to America in general, and the Government of Massachusetts Bay in particular, is it to be wondered at, I repeat, that men, who wish to avert the impending blow, should attempt to oppose it in its progress, or prepare for their defence, if it cannot be averted? Surely I may be allowed to answer in the negative; and again give me leave to add as my opinion, that more blood will be spilled on this occasion, if the Ministry are determined to push matters to extremity, than history has ever yet furnished instances of in the annals of North America, and such a vital wound will be given to the peace of this great country, as time itself cannot cure, or eradicate the remembrance of.

But I have done. I was involuntarily led into a short discussion of this subject by your remarks on the conduct of the Boston people, and your opinion of their wishes to set up for independency. I am well satisfied, that no such thing is desired by any thinking man in all North America; on the contrary, that it is the ardent wish of the warmest advocates for liberty, that peace and tranquillity, upon constitutional grounds, may be restored, and the horrors of civil discord prevented. . . .

General Gage's conduct in Massachusetts, and probably the false accounts sent home of the crushing effect of the Redcoats on the spirits of the rebellious colonists, brought a letter from Charles James Fox, in his new *rôle* as champion of Liberty. Hitherto we have caught but fleeting glimpses of young Fox—a sort of infant prodigy of the political world, astounding friends and foes alike by his unstudied eloquence, and a dissipated gamester, whose losses darkened the closing years of an idolising father. Lord Holland's death in July of this year, followed by that of Lady Holland in less than a month, helped to bring Fox to his senses. His father had already paid his debts, to the tune of £140,000, and, if penitence could have atoned for the wrongs he had

inflicted upon his parents, his letters to his mother during the preceding winter would have purged all his offences. Although that was impossible, henceforth he was a changed man, both politically and morally—especially politically, for in the other respect his sorrow, as Sir George Trevelyan says, bore fruit in amended, though far from perfect, conduct. In the larger world of politics, however, having been dismissed from his Treasury post for wantonly accusing Lord North in the House of pusillanimity—the culminating offence of the series of insubordinations which had marked his flighty official path in the first four and a quarter years of his Parliamentary life—Fox left the Tory camp for ever, to embark on his illustrious career in the cause of Freedom. His father's death removed the last link which bound him to the Court, and Burke, now inspiring him with his principles and enthusiasms, he declared himself in the autumn of this year a loyal partisan of Lord Rockingham. Chatham had also filled him with faith in the essential justice of the American cause, and he threw himself into the struggle on that behalf against the arbitrary policy of the Crown :

CHARLES JAMES FOX TO EDMUND BURKE.

[*"Correspondence of Edmund Burke."*]

NEWMARKET, October 13, 1774.

Dear Burke,

Though your opinions have turned out to be but too true, I am sure you will be far enough from triumphing in your foresight. What a dismal piece of news ! and what a melancholy consideration for all thinking men, that no people, animated by what principle soever, can make a successful resistance to military discipline. I do not know that I was ever so affected with any public event, either in history or in life.¹ The introduction of great standing armies into Europe has, then, made all mankind irrecoverably slaves. But to complain is useless, and I cannot bear to give the Tories the triumph of seeing how dejected I am at heart. Indeed, I am not altogether so much so about the particular business in question,

¹ Fox is supposed to be referring here to the proceedings of General Gage in the province of Massachusetts.

which I think very far from being decided, as I am from the sad figure that *men* make against *soldiers*. I have written to Lord Rockingham, to desire him to lose no time in adopting some plan of operations in consequence of this event. I am clear a secession is now totally unadvisable ; and that nothing but some very firm and vigorous step will be at all *becoming* ; whether that or any thing else can be useful, I am sure I do not know. If the Ministry were free agents, and had common sense, I think it not impossible but some good might be wrought even out of this evil ; I mean, if they were able to take this opportunity of making proper concessions. The Duke of Grafton does not despair of this, and in that view, does not feel as I do about this news ; but I believe he is very widely mistaken indeed ; and every thing I hear from London supports my opinion ; for I am told the exultation is excessive. If you should know, for certain, when Lord Rockingham comes to town, I should be obliged to you if you would let me know by a line directed hither.

Yours ever very affectionately,

C. J. Fox.

It was General Gage's fate to be condemned by the King for not overmastering the colonists at once, and by the colonists for excessive harshness. As indicated in the following letter to Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, then President of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, he was extremely conscientious without being in the least effective one way or the other. Gage was a soldier with a proper sense of his duty, but quite unfitted for a post requiring an administrator of commanding personality and vigorous intellect. Let him, however, speak for himself :

GOVERNOR GAGE TO PEYTON RANDOLPH.

[*" American Archives."*]

BOSTON, October 20, 1774.

Sir,

Representations should be made with candour, and matters stated exactly as they stand. People

would be led to believe, from your letter to me of the 10th instant, that works were raised against the town of Boston, private property invaded, the soldiers suffered to insult the inhabitants, and the communication between the town and country shut up and molested.

Nothing can be farther from the true situation of this place than the above state. There is not a single gun pointed against the town, no man's property has been seized or hurt, except the King's by the people destroying straw, bricks, etc., bought for his service. No troops have given less cause for complaint, and greater care was never taken to prevent it, and such care and attention was never more necessary, from the insults and provocations daily given to both officers and soldiers. The communication between the town and country has always been free and unmolested, and is so still.

Two works of earth have been raised at some distance from the town, wide of the roads and guns put in them. The remains of old works, going out of the town, have been strengthened, and guns placed there likewise. People will think differently, whether the hostile preparations throughout the country, and the menaces of blood and slaughter, made this necessary. But I am to do my duty.

It gives me pleasure that you are endeavouring at a cordial reconciliation with the Mother Country ; which, from what has transpired, I have despaired of. Nobody wishes better success to such measures than myself. I have endeavoured to be a mediator if I could establish a foundation to work upon ; and have strongly urged it to people here to pay for the tea, and send a proper memorial to the King, which would be a good beginning on their side, and give their friends the opportunity they seek, to move in their support.

I do not believe that menaces and unfriendly proceedings will have the effect which many conceive. The spirit of the British nation was high

when I left England, and such measures will not abate it. But I should hope that decency and moderation here would create the same disposition at home ; and I ardently wish that the common enemies to both countries may see, to their disappointment, that these disputes between the Mother Country and the colonies have terminated like the quarrels of lovers, and increased the affection which they ought to bear to each other. I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS GAGE.

The following extracts are representative of General Gage's correspondence at this period with Lord Dartmouth. The General had changed his mind about the number of troops necessary to prevent disorder since he talked of four regiments to George III.

BOSTON, *November 2, 1774.*

The Americans confide in their numbers, and a small force rather encourages resistance than terrifies. If I may venture an opinion in matters of such consequence, I should take the liberty to tell your lordship, that I am confident, if the misunderstandings proceed to the last extremity, that to begin with an army of twenty thousand strong will in the end save Great Britain both blood and treasure. Your lordship will doubtless receive many accounts of the situation of this country ; this province without courts of justice or legislature, the whole country in a ferment, many parts of it, I may say, actually in arms and ready to unite. Letters from other provinces tell us they are violent everywhere, and that no decency is observed in any place but New York. Great Britain had never more occasion for firmness, wisdom, and unanimity.

November 15.

The proceedings of the Continental Congress astonish and terrify all considerate men ; but though I am confident, that many of their resolutions neither

can nor will be observed, I fear they will generally be received, as there does not appear to be resolution and strength enough among the more sensible and moderate people in any of the provinces openly to reject them. This Provincial Congress [of Massachusetts] has been encouraged by the general union, and the readiness shown by the rest of the New England provinces to appear in arms at their call, to go the length they have.¹

The proceedings of the Continental Congress encouraged all the colonies by the resolution, strength and unity which they revealed. They also proved to George III. and his Ministers that they were faced with considerably more than the determined opposition of one discontented province, and that the attempt to isolate Massachusetts was an ignominious failure. Otherwise the proceedings for the most part were studiously temperate in tone. In this connexion we may be permitted to quote the account written by Dr. Woodrow Wilson in his *Life of his greatest predecessor in the presidential chair of the United States*: "For seven weeks of almost continuous session did it hammer its stiff business into shape, never wearying of deliberation or debate, till it could put forth papers to the world—an address to the King, memorials to the people of Great Britain and to the people of British America, their fellow-subjects, and a solemn Declaration of Rights—which should mark it no revolutionary body, but a Congress of just and thoughtful Englishmen, in love, not with licence or rebellion, but with right and wholesome liberty. Their only act of aggression was the formation of an 'American Association,' pledged against trade with Great Britain till the legislation of which they complained should be repealed. Their only intimation of intentions for the future was a resolution to meet again the next spring, should their prayers not meanwhile be heeded. Washington turned homeward from the Congress with thoughts and purposes every way deepened and matured. It had been a mere seven weeks' conference; no one had deemed the Congress a Government, or had spoken of any object save peace and

¹ "Washington's Writings."

accommodation ; but no one could foresee the issue of what had been done." ¹

While the Continental Congress did its best to restrain its more fiery spirits, the same can scarcely be said of the Suffolk Committee Meeting near Boston, which passed nineteen resolutions exceeding anything that had been attempted before in the way of downright formal defiance of British authority. Among other declarations in this famous document, drafted by Dr. Warren, it was resolved " that no obedience is due from this province to the late Acts, but that they be rejected as the attempts of a wicked Administration to enslave America, . . . and that the inhabitants do use their utmost endeavours to acquaint themselves with the art of war, and do, for that purpose, appear under arms at least once every week." These resolutions were forwarded to the Continental Congress and received with enthusiasm. " The only apology which could be made for the conduct of the Continental Congress in adopting the Suffolk resolves," according to the *Pennsylvania Journal*, " was that they came into their vote immediately after drinking thirty-two bumpers of Madeira." George III. professed himself by no means displeased when despatches brought him news of these definite acts of defiance :

I am not sorry [he wrote to Lord North on November 18] that the line of conduct seems chalked out, which the enclosed dispatches thoroughly justify ; the New England Governments are in a state of rebellion, blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent. ²

North experienced less difficulty than ever in passing further measures of repression when Parliament met this month after the General Election. The demoralised Opposition in the Commons had dwindled to seventy-three members, one of whom was Wilkes, who, again returned unopposed for Middlesex, was this time permitted to take his seat. Wilkes violently opposed the laws for penalising the colonists, but the Government proceeded with its measures for strengthening its military forces in America, and prepared to cut off

¹ Dr. Woodrow Wilson's " George Washington," p. 164.

² " Correspondence of George III. with Lord North."

all the colonies, save North Carolina, New York, and Delaware, from trade with England, as well as from the American fisheries. One of the officers newly arrived in Boston sent home a letter which as we read it even to-day can scarcely fail to fill us with shame and indignation :

AN OFFICER'S LETTER HOME.

[*American Archives.*]

BOSTON, *November 22, 1774.*

According to my promise I write to you of my arrival. The troops are just put into quarters. The workmen at Boston were so mulish that the General was obliged to send to Nova Scotia for carpenters and bricklayers to fit up barracks for our accommodation. The country is very plentiful, and all sorts of provisions cheaper than in London, though much risen from such a number of people being got together. The inhabitants of this colony retain the religious and civil principles brought over by their forefathers in the reign of Charles the First, and are at least a hundred years behind the people of England in every refinement. With the most austere show of devotion, they are void of every principle of religion or common honesty, and reckoned the most arrant cheats and hypocrites upon the whole continent of America. The women are very handsome, but, like old mother Eve, very frail ; our camp has been as well supplied in that way since we have been on Boston Common, as if our tents were pitched on Blackheath. As to what you hear of their taking arms to resist the force of England, it is mere bullying, and will go no farther than words ; whenever it comes to blows, he that can run fastest will think himself best off : believe me, any two regiments here ought to be decimated if they did not beat, in the field, the whole force of the Massachusetts Province ; for though they are numerous, they are but a mere mob, without order or discipline, and very awkward at handling their arms. If you have ever seen Colonel D. marching his regiment from Ludgate

Hill to the Artillery Ground, you have an epitome of the discipline of an American Army. We expect to pass the winter very quietly. The saints here begin to relish much the money we spend among them, and I believe, notwithstanding all their noise, would be very sorry to part with us.

Another officer sent a letter to England a few weeks later which shows the other side of the picture. General Charles Lee, "the soldier of fortune," as he subsequently came to be known, was appointed Washington's second in command when war broke out in the following year, resigning his commission in the British Army to fight with his fellow-countrymen. Although he nearly wrecked their cause by what looked remarkably like the basest treachery, there does not appear to be any doubt about his sincerity when he wrote this letter to Burke :

GENERAL LEE TO EDMUND BURKE.

[*"Correspondence of Edmund Burke."*]

ANNAPOLIS, December 16, 1774.

Dear Sir,

As any apology I could make, for having so long delayed answering your friendly and obliging letter, would be extremely lame and defective, I shall not attempt any ; but only assure you that the continuation of your correspondence (though I so little deserve it) will give me the greatest pleasure ; and if I could obtain your good opinion and friendship, I should think it the greatest honour. You are by this time as well acquainted with the public proceedings and resolves of this continent as myself. I shall therefore not trouble you with them, but some account of their dispositions in general may not be unwelcome to you ; and, on this subject, I deserve some credit ; for, in my last letter, I predicted what they would do, and things have fallen out according to my predictions. I will now, therefore, venture to predict, that unless the Boston Bills (and I may add the Quebec) are repealed, the empire of Great Britain is no more. I have now run through almost the whole

colonies, from the north to the south. I have conversed with every order of men, from the first estated gentleman to the poorest planter, and cannot express my astonishment at the unanimous, ardent spirit reigning through the whole. They are determined to sacrifice every thing, their property, their wives, and blood, rather than cede a tittle of what they conceive to be their rights. The tyranny exercised over Boston, indeed, seems to be resented by the other colonies in a greater degree than by the Bostonians themselves. I cannot help being persuaded that those men who first urged the Ministry to this accursed fatal step, have, from a wicked shame of acknowledging their misrepresentations, continued still to keep them in the dark. They first assured them of the practicability of the scheme, that the Bostonians would, on the first appearance of an army, and fleet, be frightened into a submission ; that their cause would not be considered as the common cause ; and now, when they see their error, they cannot muster up honesty or courage to confess it. This I am confident is the case with Hutchinson and his associates ; and there is the strongest appearance that my quondam friend, Gage, holds the same dangerous course. It is somewhat strange, but it is true, that this gentleman should reside so many years in America, and yet be as ignorant of the dispositions of the people of America as he is of those in the moon ; indeed, he took all possible means of shutting up the avenues of truth. At New York he never conversed, as I can find, with any but place and contract-hunters, the staff officers, and his own family ; and when he was sent to Boston with express orders to inform himself of the cause of the disturbances, he applied himself to the very men, and those only, from whom these disturbances were said to flow. He shut himself up immediately in Castle William, with Bernard, Hutchinson, and Sewell ; under their inspection, and according to their dictates, after three days' labour, he put the finishing

hand to a narrative of the state of the province, by which the Ministry were to regulate their conduct. It was dispatched to England, and has produced most delightful fruits. Had he condescended to listen to the representations of the town at large, these pernicious measures had, perhaps, never been adopted.

In fact, every circumstance relating to New England, as it appears to me, has been stated quite the reverse of the truth. Not only the principles and deportment of the people, but their qualifications and capacity for war have been misrepresented. Modesty, temperance, and the most inflexible firmness, are united in them. I may judge of the former from my own eyes and senses ; and for the latter, I have the greatest reason to be convinced from the best authority. I was very well acquainted at Boston with a physician of exceeding good sense and the greatest candour. He assured me that the last act of almost every father of a family whom he had attended, was to convene his sons about his death-bed, and charge them on his blessing, never to desert the common cause of their country, whatever distress they might encounter ; and as these people are most truly religious, and remarkable for their filial piety, there can be no doubt but that the injunctions of their dying parents must add a considerable quantity of fuel to the fire of enthusiasm already lighted up in their breasts by the hand of tyranny.

But what I think is a sufficient proof of the spirit and principles of these people, is the offer which they made to the Congress, to abandon their town, and never set foot within their native walls, but with the re-establishment of their liberties. Such instances of virtue and magnanimity are, I know, scarcely credible in your rotten island. It is too bright a strain for their enervated eyes to gaze at. As to their capacity for war, the want of attention to certain circumstances has led the regular officers

who served in America into a very great mistake on this head. Their troops were ill-constituted ; economy they had none. They neither knew how to cook their provisions, nor keep themselves clean. They were, consequently, much subject to camp disorders ; and in their sickness (the same care not being taken of them as of the regulars), they were apt to be dispirited. They were only enlisted for six months ; were, therefore, always new to the service ; whereas the regulars, being kept always on foot, grew more knowing and economical every day. I say, without attending to these circumstances, and without reflecting how much worse themselves would have been in the same circumstances, the regulars attributed to a difference of materials in their men what, in fact, ought to have been attributed solely to ignorance of method, and boldly asserted the people of New England to be unfit for war. They shut their eyes to all the evidences of the reverse ; to their promptness to action, their superiority in marching, and address in the use of all military instruments ; but, above all, their ardour and zeal for the service.

There is one more circumstance which we gentlemen in red never choose to remember, viz.—that in all our defeats and disgraces, particularly in those upon the Ohio, the provincials never led the flight, but were the last to leave the field. But be these things as they will, if I have any judgment, the people of New England are, this day, more calculated to form irresistible conquering armies, than any people on the face of the globe. Even the appearance of their individuals is totally changed since I first knew them. Formerly they had a slouching, slovenly air. Now, every peasant has his hair smartly dressed, is erect and soldier-like in his air and gait. This change struck me very much in passing through the provinces of Massachusetts and Connecticut. It must be attributed to the military spirit which they breathe, and their companies of cadets formed in

leaders has been laid open, and the absurdity of the resolves of the Continental Congress exposed in a masterly manner, which has served to lower that impression of high importance which the Congress had made upon people's minds.

I hoped to have procured an association of many considerable people in this town, but find them more shy of making open declarations, notwithstanding they are protected, than people are in the country, where they depend only on themselves and their friends for security. They give for excuse, that they must first know the resolutions from home on all that has passed in this country, and that it's time to declare when they are assured that the Mother Country will not relax, but resolve to pursue her measures. If they begin to associate in the town it's likely they will also fall on means to pay for the tea, for, as they are mostly traders, it would be very advantageous for them to have the port opened in the present conjuncture of their commercial affairs.

We hear from New Hampshire, that the people who were concerned in the rash action against Fort William and Mary, in that province, are terrified at what they have done, and only anxious to obtain pardon for their offence.

The Commander of Fort William and Mary may be left to tell his own story of the dramatic little affair referred to in Gage's last paragraph. It should be explained that the English Government, by proclamation, had just forbidden the exportation of gunpowder and firearms to America :

CAPTAIN COCHRAN TO GOVERNOR WENTWORTH.

[*American Archives.*]

FORT WILLIAM AND MARY,

December 14, 1774.

May it please your Excellency.

I received your Excellency's favour of yesterday, and in obedience thereto kept a strict watch all night, and added two men to my usual number, being all I could get. Nothing material occurred till this

day, one o'clock, when I was informed there was a number of people coming to take possession of the Fort, upon which, having only five effective men with me, I prepared to make the best defence I could, and pointed some guns to those places where I expected they would enter. About three o'clock the Fort was besieged on all sides by upwards of four hundred men. I told them on their peril not to enter ; they replied they would ; I immediately ordered three four-pounders to be fired on them, and then the small arms, and before we could be ready to fire again, we were stormed on all quarters, and they immediately secured both me and my men, and kept us prisoners about one hour and a half, during which time they broke open the powder house, and took all the powder away except one barrel, and having put it into boats and sent it off, they released me from my confinement. To which I can only add, that I did all in my power to defend the Fort, but all my efforts could not avail against so great a number. I am your Excellency's, etc.

JOHN COCHRAN.

The next letter also deserves quoting as a further commentary upon the Government's vain attempt to prevent the colonists from obtaining arms and ammunition :

A PHILADELPHIAN TO AN ENGLISH M.P.

[*American Archives.*]

PHILADELPHIA, *December 24, 1774.*

The late Proclamation forbidding the exportation of gunpowder and firearms to America seemed intended to take away from the colonies the power of defending themselves by force. I think it my duty to inform you that the said Proclamation will be rendered ineffectual by a manufactory of gunpowder, which has lately been set on foot in this Province, the materials of which may be procured in great perfection, and at an easier rate than they can be imported from Great Britain, among ourselves. There are, moreover, gunsmiths enough in this Province to

make one hundred thousand stands of arms in one year, at twenty-eight shillings sterling apiece, if they should be wanted. It may not be amiss to make this intelligence as public as possible, that our rulers may see the impossibility of enforcing the late Acts of Parliament by arms. Such is the wonderful martial spirit which is enkindled among us, that we begin to think the whole force of Great Britain could not subdue us. We trust no less to the natural advantages of our country than to our numbers and military preparations, in the confidence and security of which we boast. The four New England colonies, together with Virginia and Maryland, are completely armed and disciplined, the Province of Pennsylvania will follow their example ; in a few weeks our Militia will amount to no less than sixty thousand men.

Nothing but a total repeal of the Acts of Parliament of which we complain can prevent a civil war in America. Our opposition has now risen to desperation. It would be as easy to allay a storm in the ocean by a single word, as to subdue the free spirit of the Americans without a total redress of their grievances. May a spirit of wisdom descend at last upon our Ministry, and rescue the British Empire from destruction. We tremble at the thoughts of a separation from Great Britain. All our glory and happiness have been derived from you, but we are in danger of being shipwrecked upon your rocks. To avoid these, we are willing to be tossed, without a compass or guide, for a while upon an ocean of blood.

Wishing you success in your disinterested labours to promote the happiness of this country, I am, sir, with much esteem for your firmness, your most obedient servant.

The year 1775 dawned with little hope of any attempt at a proper grasp of the crisis on the part of the Court and Government at home. Ill informed as they were, they never dreamt that there was anything to fear except, perhaps, the unpleasant task of punishing a refractory group of unworthy

sons. The London merchants began seriously to take alarm at their continued losses in the American trade, but that alarm, as Burke wrote to Rockingham on January 12, was “ as yet not strong enough to get the better of their habitual deference to administration.”¹ A mildly worded petition from these merchants, setting forth the losses and danger to which British commerce was exposed by a continuance of the differences with the American colonies, was presented on January 23 to the House of Commons by Alderman Harley, who moved that it should be taken into consideration by a Committee of the whole House on American affairs, already appointed for the 26th. This was opposed by Ministers, who, by a majority of 197 to 81, referred it to a Select Committee for the 27th. Other petitions of the same kind were afterwards referred to this Committee, and being all equally neglected, the Select Committee was named by Burke “ The Committee of Oblivion.” The dispirited and distrustful spirit which animated the Opposition at this time cannot, perhaps, be better illustrated than by the series of four letters which follow, the first three from the “ Correspondence of Lord Chatham ” :

THE COUNTESS OF CHATHAM TO THE
EARL OF CHATHAM.

January 18, 1775.

I think it important, that you should know what infinite pains are taken to circulate an authoritative report, that you are *determined* to give yourself *no* trouble upon American affairs, and that, for certain, you do not mean to come to town. It is so strong, that it proves how much there is to be afraid of, of jockeyship, and whatever is bad. Let me recommend to you to have a great attention to yourself ; and pray let Wielbier and sage Pam join in examining that windows are down, doors shut, &c., that you may not be *made* to catch cold. Our friends have met to-day Lord Ancram, Palliser,² and more, who lamented,

¹ “ Correspondence of Edmund Burke.”

² Sir Hugh Palliser, who had served under Sir Charles Saunders at the siege of Quebec. He was at this time member for Scarborough.

with the greatest anxiety, the assurance of your not being able to come, and that without you the nation was undone. I am almost shaken about my Court to-morrow, since I heard all this.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE
COUNTESS OF CHATHAM.

January 18, 1775.

My dearest Love,

For God's sake, sweet life, don't disquiet yourself about the impudent and ridiculous lie of the hour. The plot does lie very deep. It is only a pitiful device of fear ; Court fear, and faction fear. If gout does not put in a veto, which I trust in Heaven it will not, I will be in the House of Lords on Friday, then and there to make a motion relative to America. Be of good cheer, noble love—

" Yes, I am proud—I must be proud—to see,
Men not afraid of God, afraid of me."

Look fresh and merrily to-morrow, and I will *look* to doors and windows.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO EARL STANHOPE.

January 19, 1775.

My dear Lord,

I mean to-morrow to touch only the threshold of American business and knock at the Minister's door to wake him, as well as show I attend to America. I shall move for an address, to send orders immediately for removing the forces from the town of Boston as soon as practicable. Be so good as not to communicate what my intended motion is to any one whatever ; but the more it is known and propagated that I am to make a motion *relative to America* the better. Adieu till to-morrow, my dear Lord. I greatly wish Dr. Franklin may be in the House if the House is open to others than members of parliament.

CHATHAM.

EDMUND BURKE TO A COMMITTEE AT BRISTOL.

[“ *Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*”]

January 20, 1775.

Gentlemen,

I have deferred any account of the proceedings in Parliament until they discovered something clear and decisive concerning the designs of Ministry with regard to the grand object of this session—the affairs of America. I am sorry to find that they are such as, I believe, will give you very little satisfaction, and will contribute as little to the advantage and repose of this distracted Empire.

This day, the Earl of Chatham made a motion, without concert or communication with any individual that I know of, desiring an address to the Crown to remove the troops from Boston, as an indication of a disposition in the Mother Country to conciliate with the colonies. Anything which led to an early declaration of an healing system, could not be rejected by those who are adverse to the late unhappy measures of violence. It were to be wished, indeed, that the motion had been an amendment to the Ministerial motion of an American committee ; or an instruction to it, the purport of which might be, to find means of reconciliation between Great Britain and her colonies ; rather than a proposition of this detached nature, wholly unconnected with any sort of plan for settling the many troublesome questions which must necessarily arise, in the adjustment of this most difficult and complicated business. Lord Chatham also agitated, I think not with a great deal of necessity or prudence, the question of the supreme sovereignty of this country, and its right of taxing. Since America has not stated any dissatisfaction to have happened in consequence of our Declaratory Act, and has desired no relief in that matter, those who cordially wish a reconciliation between the two countries, would hardly wish to teach them to be dissatisfied with our compliance even with the whole of the American demands.

The Ministry (which is indeed the purpose of my writing) have declared through Lord Suffolk, that they are determined to embrace no conciliatory measures ; but will persist in the plan of the last session, and enforce an entire obedience. It is necessary that this should be known in Bristol.

The debate continued a long time, that is, until nine. Lord Chatham spoke twice. The other speakers were, for the Ministry, Lord Suffolk, Lord Lyttelton, Lord Townshend, Lord Gower, Lord Rochford, Lord Weymouth ; for the motion, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, Duke of Richmond, and the Marquess of Rockingham. Lord Rockingham's friends, though not quite so properly treated, thought it best not to encourage the idea of violence to America. They adhered to the Declaratory Act, but Lord Rockingham declared against the use of troops, and said, that the sending of any more would only prevent obedience, and that every town at which they were stationed would be turned into a Boston. The Duke of Richmond considered the Declaratory Act rather as necessary at the time than strictly right, but thought the idea of a repeal improper, and attended with insuperable difficulties. The division was, against the question, sixty-eight ; for it, eighteen. More would have been in the minority, if Lord Chatham had thought proper to give notice of his motion to the proper people. . . .

The only effect of Chatham's speech on the stubborn Government was to rouse its anger. "The Ministry were violent beyond expectation, almost to madness," wrote the younger Pitt, who sent his mother a glowing account of his father's eloquence. "Instead of recalling the troops now there, they talked of sending more," etc. Such sweeping condemnation as Chatham poured on the Government was scarcely calculated to persuade that obdurate body to adopt his pacific advice :

Resistance to your Acts was necessary as it was just ; and your vain declarations of the omnipotence



Emery Walker, photographer

EDMUND BURKE

From a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery

of Parliament, and your imperious doctrines of the necessity of submission, will be found equally impotent to convince, or to enslave your fellow-subjects in America, who feel that tyranny, whether *ambitioned* by an individual part of the Legislature or the bodies who compose it, is equally intolerable to British subjects. The means of enforcing this thralldom are found to be as ridiculous and weak in practice, as they are unjust in principle. Indeed, I cannot but feel the most anxious sensibility for the situation of General Gage, and the troops under his command ; thinking him, as I do, a man of humanity and understanding ; and entertaining, as I ever will, the highest respect, the warmest love, for the British troops. Their situation is truly unworthy ; penn'd up—pinning in inglorious inactivity. They are an army of impotence. You may call them an army of safety and of guard—but they are in truth an army of impotence and contempt ; and, to make the folly equal to the disgrace, they are an army of irritation and vexation.

But I find a report creeping abroad, that Ministers censure General Gage's inactivity ; let *them* censure him—it becomes them—it becomes their *justice* and their *honour*. I mean not to censure his inactivity ; it is a prudent and necessary inaction : but it is a miserable condition, where disgrace is prudence, and where it is necessary to be contemptible. This tameness, however contemptible, cannot be censured ; for the first drop of blood shed in civil and unnatural war might be *immedicabile vulnus*.

His Majesty is advised, that the union in America cannot last ! Ministers have more eyes than I, and should have more ears ; but with all the information I have been able to procure, I can pronounce it an union, solid, permanent, and effectual. Ministers may satisfy themselves, and delude the public, with the report of what they call commercial bodies in America. They are *not* commercial ; they are your packers and factors : they live upon nothing—for I

call commission nothing. I mean the Ministerial *authority* for this American intelligence ; the runners for Government, who are paid for their intelligence. But these are not the men, nor this the influence, to be considered in America, when we estimate the firmness of their union. Even to extend the question, and to take in the really mercantile circle, will be totally inadequate to the consideration. Trade indeed increases the wealth and glory of a country ; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land : in their simplicity of life is found the simpleness of virtue—the integrity and courage of freedom. These true genuine sons of the earth are invincible : and they surround and hem in the mercantile bodies ; even if these bodies, which supposition I totally disclaim, could be supposed disaffected to the cause of liberty. Of this general spirit existing in the British nation (for so I wish to distinguish the real and genuine Americans from the pseudo-traders I have described)—of this spirit of independence, animating the *nation* of America, I have the most authentic information. It is not new among them ; it is, and has ever been, their established principle, their confirmed persuasion : it is their nature, and their doctrine.

I remember, some years ago, when the repeal of the Stamp Act was in agitation, conversing in a friendly confidence with a person of undoubted respect and authenticity on that subject ; and he assured me with a certainty which his judgment and opportunity gave him, that these were the prevalent and steady principles of America—that you might destroy their towns, and cut them off from the superfluities, perhaps the conveniences, of life ; but that they were prepared to despise your power, and would not lament their loss, whilst they have—what, my Lords ?—their *woods* and their *liberty*. The name of my authority, if I am called upon, will authenticate the opinion irrefragably [Dr. Franklin].

If illegal violences have been, as it is said, com-

mitted in America, prepare the way, open the door of possibility, for acknowledgment and satisfaction : but proceed not to such coercion, such proscription ; cease your indiscriminate inflictions ; amerce not thirty thousand ; oppress not three millions, for the fault of forty or fifty individuals. Such severity of injustice must for ever render incurable the wounds you have already given your colonies ; you irritate them to unappeasable rancour. What though you march from town to town, and from province to province ; though you should be able to enforce a temporary and local submission, which I only suppose, not admit—how shall you be able to secure the obedience of the country you leave behind you in your progress, to grasp the dominion of eighteen hundred miles of continent, populous in numbers, possessing valour, liberty, and resistance ? This resistance to your arbitrary system of taxation might have been foreseen : it was obvious from the nature of things, and of mankind ; above all, from the Whiggish spirit flourishing in that country. The spirit which now resists your taxation in America is the same which formerly opposed loans, benevolences, and ship-money, in England : the same spirit which called all England *on its legs*, and by the Bill of Rights vindicated the English constitution : the same spirit which established the great fundamental, essential maxim of your liberties, *that no subject of England shall be taxed but by his own consent*.

When your lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America ; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favourite study—I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master-states of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand

in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental *nation*, must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be *forced ultimately to retract* ; let us retract while we can, not when we must. I say we must necessarily undo these violent oppressive Acts : *they must be repealed—you will repeal them ; I pledge myself for it, that you will in the end repeal them ; I stake my reputation on it :—I will consent to be taken for an idiot, if they are not finally repealed.*—Avoid, then, this humiliating, disgraceful necessity. With a dignity becoming your exalted situation, make the first advances to concord, to peace and happiness : for *that* is your true dignity, to act with prudence and justice. That *you* should first concede is obvious, from sound and rational policy. Concession comes with better grace and more salutary effect from superior power ; it reconciles superiority of power with the feelings of men ; and establishes solid confidence on the foundations of affection and gratitude., So thought a wise poet and a wise man in political sagacity—the friend of Mécenas, and the eulogist of Augustus. To him, the adopted son and successor, the first Cæsar, to him, the master of the world, he wisely urged this conduct of prudence and dignity : “ *Tuque prior, tu parce ; projice tela manu.*” Every motive, therefore, of justice and of policy, of dignity and of prudence, urges you to allay the ferment in America—by a removal of your troops from Boston—by a repeal of your Acts of Parliament—and by demonstration of amicable dispositions towards your colonies. On the other hand, every danger and every hazard impend to deter you from perseverance in your present ruinous measures.—Foreign war hanging over your heads by a slight and brittle thread : France and Spain watching your conduct, and waiting for the maturity of your errors ;—with a vigilant eye to America, and the temper of your colonies, more

than to their own concerns, be they what they may. To conclude, my Lords : If the Ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King, I will not say that they *can* alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown ; but I will affirm, *that they will make the crown not worth his wearing*—I will not say that the King is betrayed ; but I will pronounce, *that the kingdom is undone*.¹

The Ministry and the King himself showed how they scorned both the warnings of Chatham and the resolutions of the colonists by the letter to Gage written by the Colonial Secretary just a week after the foregoing speech :

LORD DARTMOUTH TO GENERAL GAGE.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

LONDON, January 27.

The violences committed by those who have taken up arms in Massachusetts, have appeared to me as the acts of a rude rabble, without plan, without concert, without conduct ; and therefore I think that a small force now, if put to the test, would be able to conquer them, with greater probability of success, than might be expected from a larger army, if the people should be suffered to form themselves upon a more regular plan, to acquire a confidence from discipline, and to prepare themselves, without which every thing must be put to the issue of a single action.

In this view of the situation of the King's affairs, it is the opinion of the King's servants, in which his Majesty concurs, that the first essential step to be taken towards re-establishing government would be to arrest and imprison the principal actors and abettors in the Provincial Congress (whose proceedings appear in every light to be acts of treason and rebellion), if regardless of your proclamation, and in defiance of it, they shall presume again to assemble for such rebellious purposes ; and if the steps taken

¹ Chatham Correspondence, Vol. IV., pp. 379-84.

upon the occasion be accompanied with due precaution, and every means be devised to keep the measure secret till the moment of execution, it can hardly fail of success, and will perhaps be accomplished without bloodshed. But however that may be, I must again repeat, that any efforts on their part to encounter a regular force cannot be very formidable, and though such a proceeding should be, according to your idea of it, a signal for hostilities, yet for the reasons I have already given, it will surely be better that the conflict should be brought on upon such a ground, than in a riper state of the rebellion.

It must be understood, however, of all I have said, that this is a matter, which must be left to your own discretion to be executed or not, as you shall, upon weighing all the circumstances, think most advisable. It is here considered as the best and most effectual means of vindicating the authority of the kingdom. Some attention must be given to the consideration of what it may be fit to do with those who shall be made prisoners in consequence of this proceeding ; and here I must confess the little hope I have, that in the present situation of things, and the temper of the population, they could be prosecuted to conviction. Their imprisonment, however, will prevent their doing any further mischief ; and, as the courts of justice are at present not permitted to be opened, the continuance of that imprisonment will be no slight punishment.

With regard to the state of America in general, affairs there are now come to a crisis, in which the Government of this country must act with firmness and decision. You will be on your guard, and on no account suffer the people, at least of the town of Boston, to assemble themselves in arms on any pretence whatever, either of town guards or militia duty ; and I the rather mention this, as a report prevails that you have not only indulged them in having such a guard, but have also allowed their militia to train and discipline in Faneuil Hall. In reviewing the

Charter of Massachusetts, I observe there is a clause, that empowers the Governor to use and execute the law martial in time of actual war, invasion, and *rebellion*. The enclosed copies of a reply made to me by the Attorney and Solicitor-General contain an opinion that the particulars stated in the papers you have transmitted are the history of an actual and open rebellion in that province ; and therefore I conceive, that according to that opinion the exercise of that power is strictly justifiable, but the expediency and propriety of adopting such a measure must depend upon your own discretion under many circumstances, that can only be judged of on the spot.

Undaunted by his defeat on the last occasion, Chatham presented to the Lords on February 1, his “ Plan for Settling the Troubles in America,” the chief features of which were that the colonies should be governed by their own Continental Parliament on the lines of the united Congress recently held at Philadelphia ; that this elective body should make a free grant to the Imperial Exchequer ; but that, as in the Rockingham Declaratory Act, the right of the supreme Parliament to regulate the colonies in trade matters should be formally acknowledged. The English Government should also have the right to quarter troops on the colonists. It was an entirely unacceptable scheme, however, in the existing state of mind on both sides of the Atlantic. Franklin, who was present on this occasion, as in the earlier debate in the Lords, has left the best account of the proceedings :

Lord Chatham, in a most excellent speech, introduced, explained, and supported his plan. When he sat down, Lord Dartmouth said it contained matter of such weight and magnitude as to require much consideration, and he therefore hoped the noble Earl did not expect their lordships to decide upon it by an immediate vote, but would be willing it should be upon the table for consideration. Lord Chatham answered readily that he expected nothing more. But Lord Sandwich rose, and in a petulant vehement

speech opposed its being received at all, and gave his opinion that it ought to be immediately rejected with the contempt it deserved. That he could never believe it to be the production of any British peer. That it appeared to him rather the work of some American ; and turning his face towards me, who was leaning on the bar, said he fancied he had in his eye the person who drew it up, one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies this country had ever known. This drew the eyes of many lords upon me ; but as I had no inducement to take it to myself, I kept my countenance as immovable as if my features had been made of wood. Then several other lords of the Administration gave their sentiments also for rejecting it, of which opinion also was strongly the wise Lord Hillsborough. But the Dukes of Richmond and Manchester, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, Lord Temple, Lord Lyttelton, and others, were for receiving it, some through approbation, and others for the character and dignity of the House.

Lord Chatham, in his reply to Lord Sandwich, took notice of his illiberal insinuation that the plan was not the person's who proposed it ; declared that it was entirely his own, a declaration he thought himself the more obliged to make, as many of their lordships appeared to have so mean an opinion of it ; for if it was so weak or so bad a thing, it was proper in him to take care that no other person should unjustly share in the censure it deserved. That it had been heretofore reckoned his vice not to be apt to take advice ; but he made no scruple to declare that if he were the first Minister of this country, and had the care of settling this momentous business, he should not be ashamed of publicly calling to his assistance a person so perfectly acquainted with the whole of American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and so injuriously reflected on ; one, he was pleased to say, whom all Europe held in high estimation, for his knowledge and wisdom, and ranked with our Boyles and Newtons ; who was an honour, not to the Eng-

lish nation only, but to human nature ! I found it harder to stand this extravagant compliment than the preceding equally extravagant abuse ; but kept as well as I could, an unconcerned countenance, as not conceiving it to relate to me.¹

So powerful now was the Ministerial influence that Chatham's Bill was not even accorded the common courtesy of a second hearing, but dismissed forthwith by a majority of two to one. Chatham's gout prevented him from seeing the debate through to its premature end. How deeply his absence was felt may be seen from Camden's next letter to him :

LORD CAMDEN TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

CAMDEN PLACE, February 12, 1775.

My dear Lord,

As I am here for two or three hours, I am eager to catch the occasion of knowing with certainty the state of your lordship's health, which is so important to the public as well as to your friends. It is true that we made shift, without your Lordship's assistance, to drag on the debate last Tuesday till two o'clock in the morning ; but, in my opinion, six hours with your lordship is more efficacious than a hundred without you.

The Ministry are proceeding with the most mischievous expedition to plunge the nation irrecoverably into a civil war, which, indeed, I consider as commenced by the joint address ; and the Bill to cut off the four New England colonies from the fishery is to be brought on to-day. I am grieved to observe that the landed interest is almost altogether anti-American, though the common people hold the war in abhorrence, and the merchants and tradesmen, for obvious reasons, are likewise against it. Nevertheless, my opinion of the justice and the success of it is precisely the same, and does not yield to the majority within doors, or the powerful assent without.

¹ Chatham Correspondence.

Before the end of the month Lord North made a last effort to untie the Gordian knot by conciliatory means in his proposals in the House to the effect that any colony making such contributions towards the common defence and the civil government as Parliament considered adequate should be exempt from taxation. The proposals were not welcomed by North's own followers, but the Prime Minister, by means of an urgent whip, succeeded in keeping his party in order and securing the usual overwhelming majority, 274 to 88 in this case. The Opposition made no attempt to discuss the scheme as a possible basis of settlement, and Congress rejected it without hesitation. Pitt scorned the proposals from the first :

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO VISCOUNT MAHON.

[*Chatham Correspondence.*]

The motion reached me this morning [he wrote from Hayes to Lord Mahon on February 20], circulars to members having gone out last night, in order to a full attendance. I cannot collect with sufficient accuracy Lord North's plan, or rather the outlines of his plan. What has transpired is so vague, that it amounts to nothing, in practice or execution. It is a mere verbiage, a most puerile mockery, that will be spurned in America, as well as laughed at here by the friends of America and by the unrelenting enemies of that noble country. Every thing but justice and reason will, I am persuaded, prove vain to men like the Americans, with principles of right in their minds and hearts, and with arms in their hands to assert those principles. So far, however, seems to promise future good ; some parts of Ministry begin to relent, and the *butchers* in Government will soon be taught a lesson of fear, if not of humanity.

There was general rejoicing in both Houses, according to Walpole, when more stringent measures were announced. "The war with our colonies which is now declared," he wrote

to his ambassadorial friend, Horace Mann, on February 15, "is a proof how much influence jargon has on human actions. A war on our own trade is popular! Both Houses are as eager for it as they were for conquering the Indies—which acquits them a little of rapine, when they are as glad of what will impoverish them as of what they fancied was to enrich them—so like are the great vulgar and the small. Are not you foreigners amazed?"¹ Sir Horace Mann's reply is not forthcoming, but George Cressener, writing from Bonn to William Knox, ex-Provost-Marshall of Georgia, now joint Under-Secretary with John Pownall for the Colonies, throws some light on the question raised by Walpole:

GEORGE CRESSENER TO WILLIAM KNOX.

[*Manuscripts of Captain H. V. Knox, Historical MSS. Commission.*]

BONN, January 30, 1775.

I confess I feared the Government might have been led to temporize and thereby encourage the colonies to interpret what was really only humanity and tenderness into fear. . . . You can't believe how different measures would have lessened us in the esteem of my Court abroad. I congratulate you on the very wise steps taken, and I rejoice that the provinces who were so forward in coming into the agreement of non-importation will feel the resentment of their Mother Country by the loss of their commerce. I am persuaded, whenever General Gage advances into Boston, he will be joined by many of the better sort, it being impossible that men at their ease, or of common sense, can be pleased with being governed by the rabble. I look on the Bostonians as men in a high fever; bleeding will bring them to their senses, and then they may be reasoned with, a new Charter granted, the King's authority restored, and everything settled on a permanent equitable footing. . . .

A few months earlier Henry Ellis, ex-Governor of Georgia, under whom Knox had served as Provost-Marshall of that

¹ Walpole's Letters.

province, discussed the opinion of Europe on the subject at somewhat greater length. "The ignorance of people on this continent of the inability of the Americans to make a successful effort towards acquiring independence," he wrote from Spa, where he was taking the waters, "is truly surprising. They had actually given up the colonies as irrecoverably lost to Great Britain, and are astonished to find it is not so. The French wished it ardently, as an event alike tending to destroy our influence and to facilitate their scheme of aggrandisement. The Dutch equally wished it, in hopes that the Americans would then buy at their, instead of our shop, and that thence they might be enabled once more to dispute with us the empire of the ocean."¹ The same correspondent had declared a few weeks previously: "I wish the Bostonians were at the devil, for they are likely to be a continual plague to us. I have, however, no apprehensions from their power, nor yet from their courage; we know their weakness, as well as their want of bravery."² When that was the opinion of men who had served in America as colonial governors, it helps in part at least to explain, though nothing could ever excuse, such language as was uttered by the Earl of Sandwich in the Fishery Bill debate of March 16, 1775:

The noble Lord mentions the impracticability of conquering America; I cannot think the noble Lord can be serious on this matter. Suppose the colonies do abound in men, what does that signify? They are raw, undisciplined, cowardly men. I wish instead of forty or fifty thousand of these *brave* fellows, they would produce in the field at least two hundred thousand, the more the better, the easier would be the conquest; if they did not run away they would starve themselves into compliance with our measures. I will tell your lordships an anecdote that happened at the siege of Louisburg: Sir Peter Warren told me that in order to try the courage of the Americans, he ordered a great number of them

¹ Manuscripts of Captain H. V. Knox, Historical MSS. Commission, p. 112.

² *Ibid.*

to be placed in the front of the Army ; the Americans pretended at first to be much elated at this mark of distinction, and boasted what mighty feats they would do upon the scene of action. However, when the moment came to put in execution this boasted courage, behold every one of them ran from the front to the rear of the Army with as much expedition as their feet could carry them, and threatened to go off entirely if the Commander offered to make them a shield to protect the British soldiers at the expense of their blood ; they did not understand such usage. Sir Peter, finding what egregious cowards they were, and knowing of what importance such numbers must be to intimidate the French by their appearance, told these American heroes that his orders had been misunderstood, that he always intended to keep them in the rear of the Army to make the great push ; that it was the custom of generals to preserve the best troops to the last ; that this was always the Roman custom ; and as the Americans resembled the Romans in every particular, especially in courage and love of their country, he should make no scruple of following the Roman custom, and made no doubt but the modern Romans would show acts of bravery equal to any in ancient Rome. “ By such discourses as these,” said Sir Peter Warren, “ I made shift to keep them with us, though I took care they should be pushed forward in no dangerous conflict.” Now, I can tell the noble Lord that this is exactly the situation of all the heroes in North America ; they are all Romans. And are these the men to fright us from the post of honour ? Believe me, my Lords, the very sound of a cannon would carry them off, in Sir Peter’s words, as fast as their feet could carry them.¹

Nemesis was waiting hard on the First Lord of the Admiralty’s libellous speech. The foregoing story of Louisburg, as Sir George Trevelyan says, was a lie on the face of it. “ No man with a grain of knowledge about

¹ American Archives.

military affairs would have believed it for a moment ; and no man of honour would have repeated it without believing it, even if he were not a responsible Minister addressing Parliament. By putting it into the mouth of the British admiral, Sandwich not only insulted the Americans, but the honest and generous service over which he unworthily presided.”¹ It is some consolation to know that Sandwich was taken to task for this outrage by one at least of his colleagues, the Earl of Suffolk, Secretary of State, and that sixteen peers entered their protest in the Journals to the effect that the abuse was irrelevant, and derogatory to the dignity of the House. The nobler spirit that animated the men so ignorantly despised by Sandwich is shown in the next letter to Arthur Lee in London, written by the Massachusetts leader who was so soon to lay down his life for independence at the battle of Bunker’s Hill. It is among life’s little ironies that while the memory of Joseph Warren is revered by his countrymen to-day as that of one of their national heroes, the name of Sandwich is only associated in the minds of Englishmen with the railway snack which is the standing joke of the professional humorist, from its having been invented by the Earl in order that he could eat without leaving the gaming table :

JOSEPH WARREN TO ARTHUR LEE.

[*American Archives.*]

BOSTON, April 3, 1775.

Dear Sir,

. . . If we ever obtain a redress of grievances from Great Britain, it must be by the influence of those illustrious personages whose virtue now keeps them out of power. The King never will bring them into power until the ignorance and frenzy of the present Administration make the Throne on which he sits shake under him. If America is an humble instrument of the salvation of Britain, it will give us the sincerest joy ; but if Britain must lose her liberty, she must lose it alone. America must and will be free. The contest may be severe—the end

¹ “ The American Revolution,” Vol. I., p. 251.



nery Walker, photographer

JOHN MONTAGU, FOURTH EARL OF SANDWICH

From a painting after John Zoffany, R.A. in the National Portrait Gallery

will be glorious. We would not boast, but we think, united and prepared as we are, we have no reason to doubt of success, if we should be compelled to the last appeal ; but we mean not to make that appeal until we can be justified in doing it in the sight of God and man. Happy shall we be if the Mother Country will allow us the free enjoyment of our rights, and indulge us in the pleasing employment of aggrandizing her. . . .

The First Brigade of the army marched about four miles out of town three days ago, under the command of a Brigadier-General (Earl Percy), but as they marched without baggage or artillery, they did not occasion so great an alarm as they otherwise would. Nevertheless great numbers, completely armed, collected in the neighbouring towns ; and it is the opinion of many, that had they marched eight or ten miles, and attempted to destroy any magazines, or abuse the people, not a man of them would have returned to Boston. The Congress immediately took proper measures for restraining any unnecessary effusion of blood ; and also passed proper resolves respecting the army, if they should attempt to come out of the town with baggage and artillery.

Before the news of these ominous proceedings, or of the approaching outbreak at Lexington, which set the whole continent ablaze, could reach England, it had been decided to send out a new army to Boston, bringing up the total strength to 10,000 men. Gage was to be superseded by General William Howe, M.P., younger brother of Admiral Richard Howe, and of the Lord Howe who fell at Ticonderoga in 1758. Lords Amherst and Effingham, and Admiral Keppel, declined commands in the expedition, on the conscientious ground that they could not draw their swords in such a cause. General Howe himself had no heart for the business. He had vowed before his Nottingham constituents at the general election in the previous year that he would not hesitate to refuse if invited to lead English troops against the colonists ; and when news at length

reached him that he had been chosen for the appointment, he asked anxiously whether this was in the nature of a proposal or an order. On being told that it was a command, Howe reluctantly obeyed—a fact which Nottingham did not forget when the next election came round. Howe was accompanied by Major-General Sir Henry Clinton, M.P. for Newark, who had seen service in the Seven Years' War under Prince Ferdinand, and whose father had been Governor of New York; and by Major-General John Burgoyne, M.P. for Preston, a natural son of Lord Bingley, who had greatly distinguished himself in Portugal under Lord Tyrawley. A few days before these commanding officers left London for the fleet, which was waiting to sail with the army from Portsmouth, a colonial in London, whose name is omitted from the "*American Archives*," sounded the alarm in a letter which reflects the excitement and anxiety of the hour :

LETTER FROM LONDON TO A FRIEND IN NEW YORK.

LONDON, *April 10, 1775.*

[*American Archives.*]

The quality at the Court-end despise the poor and industrious, and are obliged now to inform the mob that their brethren in America are to be slaughtered by the large fleet and army now ready to sail against them. The people are kept in total ignorance of public affairs, and the wisdom of our Senators is to deceive those they are chosen to protect. There are to be two thousand pounds added to the King's salary, with a present, to pay his household debts of some thousands. When the Budget opens, fine work how this money will be raised, and each common shop pay ten pounds, or fifteen pounds sterling tax. Everything is taxed but the public places of diversion; and they are so filled with people, so numerous, and cause so large a circulation of cash, that they are the only blessings the people think are left them; for they make the rich spend their money and the sharpers get it. All this is the wise people who are to have the collecting of your taxes, and to support this mode are the mighty

preparations of war. Oh, God ! who beholds the inhabitants of the earth, and hears the cries of the poor ; who understands judgment, and rules in righteousness, look on America, and keep the land from being polluted with the sins of the Mother Country. Oh, if I dare write what I wish you all to do—what you can do, and what Providence seems to intend you shall do !

If you submit, all will be for ever lost ; a curse on your names, and your estates confiscated by those bills of attainder that are ready to pass against you ! 'Tis impossible to describe the ruin that is studied ; the load of taxes ; the number of placemen to be saddled on you. The land is to be confiscated, and the King an arbitrary Monarch. He is determined to be arbitrary, and consults no one who will not encourage his universal sway. He lives retired ; only three times a week goes to the public diversions, Pantheon, plays, operas, and has given fifteen hundred pounds to an Italian singer. The young Prince is to go to housekeeping this spring, and the men appointed to attend his levée are of such a complexion as forebodes evil. . . . If the fleet sails, you must fight or be destroyed ; for the Ministry are determined to destroy your trade, to ruin the growth of the colonies, and to stop all the blessings Heaven has given you. Get ready to fight, for nothing can save you but the power of the colonies and their own strength, and to America will England owe their liberty, or be ruined. Several gentlemen called on me, and desired me to write to you to arm immediately. Get ready to receive ten thousand men and four hundred sail, and you are to find provisions and to pay for them yourselves. New charters are ready now ; for your money, the soldiers have orders to fight ; new cannon, guns, powder, and ball, for war and blood ! The cry of blood is gone out against you. Your fate now depends on the brave and spirited conduct of yourselves. You see the diabolical plot is deep laid against you ; and by bribes and

undue influence, has obtained the late and the present Acts for blocking up your trade, and taking those unwarrantable measures against the colonies and the sense of the people.

This day will be remembered in history ; for John Wilkes and the King to meet on such a solemn occasion, no less than the lives and property of all America and the whole English nation. Great will be the event of this day. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Liverymen, Recorder, Remembrancer, and City officers, all went in procession. A copy of the King's answer is to be sent to you. This answer will rouse up the blood of the English, and all America will see that they must fight, and that they have no hopes left. The glory of Old England is no more ! All is lost ! God is about to move the Kingdom ; and soon, very soon, the King will see his counsellors have deceived him, and the people of England will not bear their insults. The Bank and the stocks will fail, as no trade is carried on with spirit until the spring ; and now all begins to stop. All things are in an uproar ; the City is affronted ; the people insulted ; the island of Great Britain exposed to the French and the Spaniards ; no remittances from the merchants as usual ; the great expense to keep up the war, together with fighting against their own people (and in the most unjust cause that ever disgraced a kingdom). All men of sense are astonished and tremble. England has taken her last legal steps, and done all they lawfully can do, and now depend on the Americans to help themselves, and on their own feelings ; that the Americans will act like men of virtue and wisdom, and that all will oppose the greatest tyrant that ever yet was seen, who now is hardened Pharaoh-like.

The Quakers in England have petitioned the King themselves, as a people, and now attended the City Petition, all in one voice against the Ministry, and are all faithful to the people in America. The Quakers are the most hearty in the cause, and see

the dreadful consequences of a civil war. Our forefathers did not think that ever a King of England would break his oath, and murder his subjects in cold blood, and take their money, or rob his people, without giving them any opportunity to defend themselves but by the sword. This is dreadful, and dreadfully true. May the God of our forefathers direct you so to defend your rights and property, as will teach us to depend on the justice of our cause, and the hearty love of our country, in full confidence of a complete victory. This is the hearty prayer of thousands.

The continual inquiries are, How will the colonies behave? Will they act like men? Or are they such poltroons as Lord Sandwich said they were? In his speech in the House of Lords, he said that the Americans are cowards; will not fight; are men of a mean spirit; dastardly poltroons; all noise and bully; that a few soldiers would soon make them submit. But God forbid that my worthy friends in America should add disgrace to ruin, and make the cause of God and man of no effect. The fleet is sailed or sailing. General Gage has drawn bills on the Treasury, £2,400 for secret services to pay the tools of Government in all the different colonies. Such bad policy must bring on ruin. Many of the hungry dependants on the King have asked for places; and you will not only have taxes to pay, and a standing army set over you, but you will have all those vile cattle to maintain. You will have all your blessings taken away if you submit. But if you stand firmly out, and demand your rights, and are determined to fight, the Ministry will be obliged to send you offers of peace, and make satisfaction for all the damage you have already sustained, and be glad of a reconciliation, for England cannot possibly live without you. The silence of the people was occasioned by fear of the Bank, as the National Debt is so great; but now, the tobacco and oil, and other revenues from America, bring to England two millions. This is proved from the Custom House books, which the

Chamberlain of London has been at the expense and trouble to collect and lay before the King. Yet his heart is hardened like iron, and, as Pharaoh, he will drive his chariot into the German Sea, not without a host of his nobles to attend him.

With this letter were enclosed a copy of the Petition of the Lord Mayor of London referred to, "praying for the removal of his Majesty's present Ministers for their iniquitous measures with respect to our fellow-subjects in America," together with a copy of the King's reply. Although, as was to be expected, the Petition was summarily dismissed, the occasion was a triumph for Wilkes, after all the indignities which he had heaped upon the heads of the King and his friends, now to approach his Majesty as chief magistrate of his capital—a post of far greater political power and significance in those days than in the twentieth century. Wilkes had been chosen Lord Mayor in 1774 for the first time, after the two elections in 1772 and 1773 in which, though placed at the top of the poll, he had, in the final choice of the Court of Aldermen, been passed over for other candidates :

THE PETITION OF THE CITY OF LONDON TO THE KING.

[*American Archives.*]

April 10, 1775.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Address, Remonstrance, and Petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery of the City of London, in Common Hall assembled :

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery of the City of London, beg leave to approach the Throne, and to declare our abhorrence of the measures which have been pursued, and are now pursuing, to the oppression of our fellow-subjects in America. These measures are big with all the consequences which can alarm a free and commercial people ; a deep, and, perhaps, fatal wound to commerce ; the ruin of manufactures ; the diminution of the revenue, and

consequent increase of taxes ; the alienation of the colonies ; and the blood of your Majesty's subjects.

But your Petitioners look with less horror at the consequences, than at the purpose of those measures. Not deceived by the specious artifice of calling despotism dignity, they plainly perceive that the real purpose is, to establish arbitrary power over all America.

Your Petitioners conceive the liberties of the whole to be inevitably connected with those of every part of an Empire founded on the common rights of mankind. They cannot, therefore, observe, without the greatest concern and alarm, the Constitution fundamentally violated in any part of your Majesty's Dominions. They esteem it an essential, an unalterable principle of liberty, the source and security of all constitutional rights, that no part of the Dominions can be taxed without being represented. Upon this great leading principle, they most ardently wish to see their fellow-subjects, in America, secured in what their humble Petition, to your Majesty, prays for—Peace, Liberty, and Safety. Subordination in commerce, under which the colonies have always cheerfully acquiesced, is, they conceive, all that this country ought, in justice, to require. From this subordination such advantages flow, by all the profits of their commerce centring here, as fully compensate this nation for the expense incurred, to which they, also, contribute, in men and money, for their defence and protection, during a general war ; and, in their provincial wars, they have manifested their readiness and resolution to defend themselves. To require more of them would, for this reason, derogate from the justice and magnanimity which have been hitherto the pride and character of this country.

It is, therefore, with the deepest concern that we have seen the sacred security of representation, in their Assemblies, wrested from them ; the trial by jury abolished, and the odious powers of excise extended to all cases of revenue ; the sanctuary of

their houses laid open to violation, at the will and pleasure of every officer and servant in the customs ; the dispensation of justice corrupted by rendering their judges dependent, for their seats and salaries, on the will of the Crown ; liberty and life rendered precarious by subjecting them to be dragged over the ocean, and tried for treason or felony here ; where the distance, making it impossible for the most guiltless to maintain his innocence, must deliver him up, a victim to Ministerial vengeance. Soldiers and others, in America, have been instigated to shed the blood of the people, by establishing a mode of trial which holds out impunity for such murder ; the capital of New England has been punished with unexampled rigour, untried and unheard, involving the innocent and the suspected in one common and inhuman calamity ; Chartered rights have been taken away without any forfeiture proved, in order to deprive the people of every legal exertion against the tyranny of their rulers ; the Habeas Corpus Act, and trial by jury, have been suppressed, and French despotic government, with the Roman Catholic religion, have been established, by law, over an extensive part of your Majesty's Dominions in America ; dutiful petitions for redress of those grievances, from all your Majesty's American subjects, have been fruitless.

To fill up the measures of these oppressions, an army has been sent to enforce them. Superadded to this, measures are now planned upon the most merciless policy of starving our fellow-subjects into a surrender of their liberties, and an unlimited submission to arbitrary Government. These grievances have driven your Majesty's faithful subjects to despair, and compelled them to have recourse to that resistance which is justified by the great principles of the Constitution, actuated by which, at the glorious period of the Revolution, our ancestors transferred the Imperial Crown of these realms from the Popish and tyrannical race of the Stuarts to the illustrious and Protestant House of Brunswick.

Your Petitioners are persuaded that these measures originate in the secret advice of men who are enemies equally to your Majesty's title and to the liberties of your people. That your Majesty's Ministers carry them into execution by the same fatal corruption which has enabled them to wound the peace and violate the Constitution of this country. Thus they poison the fountain of public security, and render that body, which should be the guardian of liberty, a formidable instrument of arbitrary power. Your Petitioners do, therefore, most earnestly beseech your Majesty to dismiss, immediately and for ever, from your Councils, these Ministers and advisers, as the first step towards a full redress of those grievances which alarm and afflict your whole people. So shall peace and commerce be restored, and the confidence and affection of all your Majesty's subjects be the solid supporters of your Throne.

The Petition having been read to his Majesty, it was handed to the Lord Mayor, who presented it to the King with a profound reverence. It is recorded that George III. handed the Petition to the lord-in-waiting, and then deliberately taking a paper from his pocket, read the answer. A silence of two minutes ensued, when the Lord Mayor made a low bow, then retreated backwards to the middle of the room, made a second, and in like manner, a third at the door, when the King moved his hat to his lordship, and thus ended the business :

THE KING'S REPLY.

It is with the utmost astonishment that I find any of my subjects capable of encouraging the rebellious disposition which, unhappily, exists in some of my colonies in North America. Having entire confidence in the wisdom of my Parliament, the great Council of the Nation, I will steadily pursue those measures which they have recommended for the support of the constitutional rights of Great Britain, and the protection of the commercial interests of my Kingdoms.¹

¹ “ American Archives.”

On the eve of the outbreak of hostilities, Walpole in his letter to Horace Mann, dated April 17, summed up the situation at home as follows :

It is more equitable to suppose that my conception is worn out, than that the world wants events. I tell you of a nation of madmen, and yet want instances. It is certain, both that we do not grow sage, and that I have nothing to say. The town is divided into two great classes, the politicians and the pleasurists. The first are occupied with that vast foetus, the American contest ; and wars at that distance do not go on expeditiously. Wilkes has arrived at his *ne plus ultra* ; he has presented a remonstrance in form to the Throne ; and, with the magnanimity of an Alexander, used his triumph with moderation—in modern language, with good breeding. The younger generation game, dress, dance, go to Newmarket. Some of them, not juniors all, learn to sing. Cortez was victorious in our last opera, “Montezuma.” I doubt the Americans will not be vanquished in recitative.¹

Two days later the Americans took the first irrevocable step towards independence. Lexington swept aside all possible solutions save by the arbitrament of the sword. Many graphic and contradictory accounts have been left by eye-witnesses of that fateful fight on April 19, 1775. The early reports threw the blame of the first shot upon the Regulars, but the truth regarding this was as hotly disputed as that over the firing of the troops in the Boston massacre :

A BOSTON CORRESPONDENT TO A FRIEND NEAR
PHILADELPHIA.

[*American Archives.*]

BOSTON, April 20, 1775.

Yesterday produced a scene the most shocking that New England ever beheld. Last Saturday p.m., orders were sent to the several regiments quartered here, not to let their Grenadiers or Light Infantry do any duty till further orders ; upon which the inhabi-

¹ Walpole's Letters.

tants conjectured that some secret expedition was on foot, and being upon the look-out, they observed those bodies on the move between ten and eleven o'clock on Tuesday night, observing a perfect silence in their march, towards the point opposite to Phipps's Farm, where boats were in waiting, that conveyed them over. The men appointed to alarm the country on such occasions got over by stealth, as early as the troops, and took their different routes.

The first advice we had was about eight o'clock in the morning, when it was reported that the troops had fired upon and killed five men in Lexington ; previous to which an officer came express to his Excellency General Gage, when, between eight and nine o'clock, a Brigade marched out under the command of Earl Percy, consisting of the Marines, the Welsh Fusiliers, the Fourth, and Forty-seventh, and Thirty-eighth Regiments, and two field pieces. About twelve o'clock it was given out by the General's aide-de-camp that no person was killed, and that a single gun had not been fired, which report was variously believed ; but, between one and two o'clock, certain accounts came that eight were killed outright, and fourteen wounded of the inhabitants of Lexington. Those people, it seems, to the number of about forty, were drawn out early in the morning near the Meeting House to exercise ; upon which the party of Light Infantry and Grenadiers, to the number of about eight hundred, came up to them and ordered them to disperse. The commander replied that they were innocently amusing themselves with exercise, that they had not any ammunition with them, and therefore should not molest or disturb them. This answer not satisfying, the troops fired upon them, and killed three or four ; the others took to their heels, and the troops continued to fire. A few took refuge in the Meeting House, when the soldiers shoved up the windows, pointed their guns in, and killed three there. This is the best account I can learn of the beginning of the fatal day, and you

must naturally suppose that such a piece of cruelty would rouse the country.

The troops continued their march to Concord, entered the town, and refreshed themselves in the Meeting House and Town House. In the latter place they found some ammunition and stores belonging to the country, which, finding they could not bring away by reason of the country people having occupied all the posts round them, they set fire to the house, but the people extinguished it. They set it on fire a second time, which brought on a general engagement at about eleven o'clock. The troops took two pieces of cannon from the countrymen ; but their numbers increasing, they soon regained them, and the troops were obliged to retreat towards the town.

At noon they were joined by the other Brigades, under Earl Percy, when another very warm engagement came on at Lexington. The troops not being able to stand it, were obliged to continue their retreat, which they did with the bravery becoming British soldiers ; but the country was in a manner desperate, not regarding their cannon in the least, and followed on till seven in the evening, by which time they got into Charlestown, when they left off the pursuit, lest they might injure the inhabitants. I stood upon the hills in the town and saw the engagement very plain, which was very bloody for seven hours ; and it is conjectured that one half of the soldiers at least are killed. The last Brigade was sent over the ferry in the evening to secure their retreat ; and they are this morning intrenching themselves upon Bunker's Hill, till they can get a safe retreat to this town.

It is impossible to learn any particulars, as the communication between town and country is at present broken off. They were till ten last night bringing over their wounded, several of whom are since dead, two officers in particular. When I reflect, and consider that the fight between those whose parents but a few years ago were brothers,

I shudder at the thought, and there is no knowing where our calamities will end.

General Gage naturally threw the blame of this “ unhappy affair ” upon the people :

GENERAL GAGE TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

[*American Archives.*]

BOSTON, April 29, 1775.

Sir,

I transmit you herewith a circumstantial account of an unhappy affair that happened in this province on the nineteenth instant, between his Majesty's troops and the people of the country, whereby you will see the pitch their leaders have worked them up to, even to commit hostilities upon the King's troops when an opportunity offered. It has long been said that this was their plan, and so it has turned out.

I am, with regard and esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

THOS. GAGE.

THE ACCOUNT ENCLOSED BY GENERAL GAGE.

On Tuesday, the 18th of April, about half-past ten at night, Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, of the Tenth Regiment, embarked from the Common, at Boston, with the Grenadiers and Light Infantry of the troops there, and landed on the opposite side ; from whence he began his march towards Concord, where he was ordered to destroy a magazine of military stores, deposited there for the use of an army to be assembled in order to act against his Majesty and his Government. The Colonel called his officers together, and gave orders that the troops should not fire unless fired upon ; and after marching a few miles, detached six companies of Light Infantry, under the command of Major Pitcairn, to take possession of two bridges on the other side of Concord. Soon after, they heard many signal guns, and the ringing of alarm-bells repeatedly, which convinced them that the country

until the troops began their march back. As soon as the troops had got out of the town of Concord, they received a heavy fire on them from all sides—from walls, fences, houses, trees, barns, etc., which continued, without intermission, till they met the First Brigade, with two field-pieces, near Lexington, ordered out under the command of Lord Percy to support them. Upon the firing of the field-pieces, the people's fire was for a while silenced ; but as they still continued to increase greatly in numbers, they fired again, as before, from all places where they could find cover, upon the whole body, and continued so doing for the space of fifteen miles.

Notwithstanding their numbers, they did not attack openly during the whole day, but kept under cover on all occasions. The troops were very much fatigued, the greater part of them having been under arms all night, and made a march of upwards of forty miles before they arrived at Charlestown, from whence they were ferried over to Boston. The troops had about fifty killed, and many more wounded. Reports are various about the loss sustained by the country people ; some make it very considerable, others not so much.

In point of fact the total British losses amounted to between two and three hundred officers and men, while the Americans lost from ninety to a hundred. It would probably have made little difference to the immediate result, whether the first shot was fired by the Regulars or the colonials, but particular pains were taken to prove that the Regulars were to blame. Samuel Adams, who was present, and for months had been living for that moment, rejoiced that his countrymen had “ put the enemy in the wrong,” and is reported to have exclaimed, as the sun rose on that decisive day, and men were flocking from all the surrounding country to lie in wait for the troops on their return—“ What a glorious morning is this ! ” The die was now cast indeed. The following was among the evidence secured to throw the blame upon the troops :

I, Elijah Sanderson, do testify and declare that I was in Lexington Common the morning of the nineteenth of April aforesaid, and saw a large body of regular troops advancing towards Lexington Company, many of whom were then dispersing. I heard one of the regulars, whom I took to be an officer, say, "Damn them, we will have them!"; and immediately the regulars shouted aloud, "Run," and fired on the Lexington Company, which did not fire a gun before the regulars discharged on them. Eight of the Lexington Company were killed while they were dispersing, and at considerable distance from each other, and many wounded; and although a spectator, I narrowly escaped with my life.

ELIJAH SANDERSON.¹

The story of the fight lost nothing in the telling to ears only too ready to believe the worst of the now detested troops :

GENERAL GAGE TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

[*American Archives.*]

BOSTON, May 3, 1775.

Sir,

. . . The intelligence you seem to have received, relative to the late excursion of a body of troops into the country is altogether injurious, and contrary to the true state of facts. The troops disclaim with indignation the barbarous outrages of which they are accused, so contrary to their known humanity. I have taken the greatest pains to discover if any were committed, and have found examples of their tenderness, both to the young and the old; but no vestige of their cruelty or barbarity. It is very possible that in firing into houses, from whence they were fired upon, that old people, women, or children, may have suffered; but if any such thing has happened, it was in their defence, and undesigned.

¹ "American Archives."

I have no command to ravage and desolate the country ; and were it my intention, I have had pretence to begin it upon the sea-ports, who are at the mercy of the fleet. For your better information, I enclose you a narrative of that affair, taken from gentlemen of indisputable honour and veracity, who were eye-witnesses of all the transactions of that day. The leaders here have taken pains to prevent any account of this affair getting abroad but such as they have thought proper to publish themselves ; and to that end the post has been stopped, the mails broke open, and letters taken out ; and by these means the most injurious and inflammatory accounts have been spread throughout the continent, which has served to deceive and inflame the minds of the people.

When the Resolves of the Provincial Congress breathed nothing but war ; when those two great and essential prerogatives of the King, the levying of troops and disposing of the public monies, were wrested from him ; and when magazines were forming, by an assembly of men unknown to the Constitution, for the declared purpose of levying war against the King, you must acknowledge it was my duty, as it was the dictate of humanity, to prevent, if possible, the calamities of a civil war, by destroying such magazines. This, and this alone, I attempted.

You ask, why is the town of Boston now shut up ? I can only refer you for an answer to those bodies of armed men who now surround the town, and prevent all access to it. The hostile preparations you mention are such as the conduct of the people of this province has rendered it prudent to make, for the defence of those under my command. You assure me the people of your colony abhor the idea of taking arms against the troops of their Sovereign ; I wish the people of this province (for their own sakes) could make the same declaration.

You inquire, is there no way to prevent this

unhappy dispute from coming to extremities ? Is there no alternative but absolute submission, or the desolations of war ? I answer, I hope there is. The King and Parliament seem to hold out terms of reconciliation, consistent with the honour and interest of Great Britain, and the rights and privileges of the colonies. They have mutually declared their readiness to attend to any real grievances of the colonies, and to afford them every just and reasonable indulgence which shall, in a dutiful and constitutional manner, be laid before them ; and his Majesty adds it is his ardent wish that this disposition may have a happy effect on the temper and conduct of his subjects in America. I must add, likewise, the Resolution of February 27, on the grand dispute of taxation and revenue, leaving it to the colonies to tax themselves, under certain conditions. Here is surely a foundation for an accommodation, to people who wish a reconciliation rather than a destructive war between countries so nearly connected by the ties of blood and interest ; but I fear the leaders of this province have been, and still are, intent only on shedding blood.

I am much obliged by your favourable sentiments of my personal character, and assure you, as it has been my constant wish and endeavour hitherto, so I shall continue to exert my utmost efforts to protect all his Majesty's liege subjects under my care in their persons and property. You ask, whether it will not be consistent with my duty to suspend the operations of war on my part ? I have commenced no operations of war, but defensive ; such you cannot wish me to suspend while I am surrounded by an armed country, who have already begun, and threaten further to prosecute an offensive war, and are now violently depriving me, the King's troops, and many others of the King's subjects under my immediate protection, of all the conveniences and necessities of life, with which the country abounds. But it must quiet the minds of all reasonable people when I assure you

that I have no disposition to injure or molest quiet and peaceable subjects ; but on the contrary shall esteem it my greatest happiness to defend and protect them against every species of violence and oppression.

I am, with great regard and esteem, sir, your obedient and humble servant,

THOS. GAGE.

Benjamin Franklin, who returned to America in time for the second Continental Congress at Philadelphia this spring, and was voted a member of it within twenty-four hours, could not resist a gibe at the expense of the Redcoats in his first letters to England, addressed to his old friends Burke and Priestley,—though he is obviously in two minds as to the rate of the British retreat :

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO DR. PRIESTLEY.

[*American Archives.*]

PHILADELPHIA, May 16, 1775.

Dear Friend,

You will have heard, before this reaches you, of a march stolen by the regulars into the country by night, and of their expedition back again. They retreated twenty miles in six hours. The Governor had called the Assembly to propose Lord North's pacific plan, but, before the time of their meeting, began cutting of throats. You know it was said he carried the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other ; and it seems he chose to give them a taste of the sword first. He is doubling his fortifications at Boston, and hopes to secure his troops till succour arrives. The place, indeed, is naturally so defensible that I think them in no danger. All America is exasperated by his conduct, and more firmly united than ever. The breach between the two countries is grown wider, and in danger of becoming irreparable.

I had a passage of six weeks, the weather constantly so moderate that a London wherry might have accompanied us all the way. I got home in the evening, and the next morning was unanimously



Emery Walker, photographer

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

From a painting after J. S. Duplessis in the National Portrait Gallery

chosen by the Assembly of Pennsylvania a delegate to the Congress now sitting.

In coming over I made a valuable philosophical discovery, which I shall communicate to you when I can get a little time. At present am extremely hurried.

Yours, most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO EDMUND BURKE.

["*Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*"]

PHILADELPHIA, May 15, 1775.

Dear Sir,

You will see by the papers that General Gage called his Assembly to propose Lord North's pacific plan ; but before they could meet, drew the sword and began the war. His troops made a most vigorous retreat—twenty miles in three hours—scarce to be paralleled in history ; the feeble Americans, who pelted them all the way, could scarce keep up with them. All people here feel themselves much obliged by your endeavours to serve them. I hear your proposed resolves were negatived by a great majority, which was denying the most notorious truths, and a kind of national lying, of which they may be convicted by their own records.¹

Dr. Warren, so soon to lose his life at Bunker's Hill, sent a letter to the Massachusetts agent in London which shows how hopeless were the prospects of retaining American loyalty so long as the existing English Ministry remained in power :

¹ This is a reference to Burke's resolutions regarding the American colonies, when he made his famous speech on conciliation on March 22. The speech added greatly to Burke's reputation as an orator. "It is so calm, so quiet, so reasonable, so just, so proper," wrote the Duke of Richmond on reading it in printed form, "that one cannot refuse conviction to every part. At other times wit, or strong pictures, or violent declamations, may be proper. There may be a season for poetry ; but in the present awful moment, the grave, sober language of truth and cool reason is much better timed ; and you appear in this speech not that lively, astonishing orator, that some other of your works show you to be, but the most wise, dispassionate, and calm statesman."—" *Correspondence of Edmund Burke.*"

JOSEPH WARREN TO ARTHUR LEE.

[*American Archives.*]

CAMBRIDGE, May 16, 1775.

My dear Sir,

Everything here continues the same as at the period of my writing a short time ago. Our military operations go on in a very spirited manner. General Gage had a reinforcement of about six hundred Marines the day before yesterday ; but this gives very little concern here. It is not expected that he will sally out of Boston at present, and if he does, he will but gratify thousands who impatiently wait to avenge the blood of their murdered countrymen. The attempt he has made to throw the odium of the first commencement of hostilities on the people here has operated very much to his disadvantage, as so many credible people were eye-witnesses of the whole affair, whose testimonies are justly supposed of infinitely greater weight than anything he has brought or can bring in support of his assertion. My private opinion is, that he is really deceived in this matter, and is led (by his officers and some other of the most abandoned villains on earth, who are natives of this country, and who are now shut up with him in Boston) to believe that our people actually began the firing ; but my opinion is only for myself ; most people are satisfied not only that he knows that the regulars began the fire, but also that he gave his orders to the commanding officer to do it. Thus by attempting to clear the troops from what every one is sure they were guilty of, he has brought on strong suspicions that he himself is guilty of having preconcerted the mischief done by them. Indeed his very unmanly conduct relative to the people of Boston, in detaining many of them, and contriving new excuses for delaying their removal after they had given up their firearms upon a promise of being suffered to leave to town and carry with them their effects, has much lessened his character [and] confirmed former suspicions.

The Continental Congress is now sitting. I suppose before I hear from you again, a new form of Government will be established in this colony. Great Britain must now make the best she can of America. The folly of her Minister has brought her into this situation. If she has strength sufficient even to depopulate the colonies, she has not strength sufficient to subjugate them. However, we can yet without injuring ourselves offer much to her. The great national advantages derived from the colonies may, I hope, yet be reaped by her from us. The plan for enslaving us, if it had succeeded, would only have put it in the power of the Administration to provide for a number of their unworthy dependants, whilst the nation would have been deprived of the most essential benefits which might have arisen from us by commerce ; and the taxes raised in America would, instead of easing the Mother Country of her burdens, only have been employed to bring her into bondage.

I cannot precisely tell you what will become of General Gage ; I imagine he will at least be kept closely shut up in Boston. Perhaps you will very soon hear something further relative to these things. One thing I can assure you has very great weight with us ; we fear if we push this matter as far as we think we are able—to the destruction of the troops and ships of war—we shall expose Great Britain to those invasions from foreign Powers which we suppose it will be difficult for her to repel.

In fact, you must have a change in men and measures, or be ruined. The truly noble Richmond, Rockingham, Chatham, Shelburne, with other Lords, and the virtuous and sensible minority in the House of Commons, must take the lead. The confidence we have in them will go a great way ; but I must tell you that those terms which would readily have been accepted before our countrymen were murdered, and we in consequence compelled to take arms, will not now do.

Everything in my power to serve the united interest of Great Britain shall be done ; and I pray that you, your brother, and Mr. Sayre (to whom I beg you would make my most respectful compliments), would write fully, freely, and speedily, to me, and let me know what our great and good friends in the House of Commons think expedient and practicable to be done.

God forbid that the nation should be so infatuated as to do anything further to irritate the colonies ; if they should, the colonies will sooner throw themselves into the arms of any other Power on earth than ever consent to an accommodation with Great Britain. That patience which I frequently told you would be at last exhausted is no longer to be expected from us. Danger and war are become pleasing ; and injured virtue is now armed to avenge herself. I am, my dear sir, your most obedient servant,

JOS. WARREN.

Writing six weeks after the event, Washington expressed his belief that had the regulars been an hour later in their retreat from Lexington they must either have surrendered or been annihilated ; and that conclusion, as Sir George Trevelyan has said, has never been disputed :

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO GEORGE WILLIAM
FAIRFAX IN ENGLAND.

[*" Washington's Writings."*]

PHILADELPHIA, May 31, 1775.

Dear Sir,

Before this letter will come to hand, you must undoubtedly have received an account of the engagement in the Massachusetts Bay, between the Ministerial troops (for we do not, nor can we yet prevail upon ourselves to call them the King's troops),¹ and the provincials of that Government. But as you

¹ The Redcoats were called " Ministerial troops," in order to place the responsibility for their acts upon Parliament and the Ministry, instead of upon the King.

may not have heard how that affair began, I enclose you the several affidavits, which were taken after the action.

General Gage acknowledges that the detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith was sent out to destroy private property ; or, in other words, to destroy a magazine, which self-preservation obliged the inhabitants to establish. And he also confesses, in effect at least, that his men made a very precipitate retreat from Concord, notwithstanding the reinforcement under Lord Percy ; the last of which may serve to convince Lord Sandwich, and others of the same sentiment, that the Americans will fight for their liberties and property, however pusillanimous in his lordship's eye they may appear in other respects.

From the best accounts I have been able to collect of that affair, indeed from every one, I believe the fact, stripped of all coloring, to be plainly this, that, if the retreat had not been as precipitate as it was, and God knows it could not well have been more so, the Ministerial troops must have surrendered, or been totally cut off. For they had not arrived in Charlestown (under cover of their ships) half an hour before a powerful body of men from Marblehead and Salem was at their heels, and must, if they had happened to be up one hour sooner, inevitably have intercepted their retreat to Charlestown. Unhappy it is, though, to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood, or inhabited by slaves. Sad alternative ! But can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice ?

When Colonel Washington, as he then was, wrote the foregoing letter, he was attending the second Continental Congress, which assembled at Philadelphia on May 10. Five days later he was unanimously chosen to be General and Commander-in-Chief of the Army to be raised in defence of

the American cause, with a salary of five hundred dollars a month :

Though I am truly sensible of the high honour done me in this appointment [he said in addressing Congress on the following day], yet I feel great distress, from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in the service, and for the support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation. But, lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in this room, that I, this day, declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with. As to the pay, I beg leave to assure the Congress that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge ; and that is all I desire.

It was not until May 18 that Washington sent the momentous news to his wife in a letter which, fortunately, has been preserved. All his other letters to his wife are said to have been destroyed by Mrs. Washington shortly before her death :

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO HIS WIFE.

[*" Washington's Writings."*]

PHILADELPHIA, June 18, 1775.

My Dearest,

I am now set down to write to you on a subject, which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that so far from seeking this appointment I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my

unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did perceive from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonour upon myself, and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign ; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity ; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid.

As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns while it is in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had not time to do it before

I left home) got Colonel Pendleton ¹ to draft a will for me, by the directions I gave him, which will I now enclose. The provision made for you in case of my death will, I hope, be agreeable. I shall add nothing more, as I have several letters to write, but to desire that you will remember me to your friends, and to assure you that I am, with the most unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy, your affectionate, etc.

There, for the time being, we must leave him, formally committed to a task which no other man was so well fitted to undertake. Time was soon to prove how far he erred on the side of modesty when he ventured to doubt that his abilities were not equal to the trust ; but already, as his own words have shown, he felt the compelling power of the hand of Destiny. Fate was on the side of Liberty when she gave Washington to America. Had such a man been forthcoming to control the destiny of the Motherland throughout that crisis a very different story would have to be told of the whole subsequent history of the English-speaking race. Washington, in the words of Dr. Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, in the second of his lectures on "Building the American Nation" which he delivered at Cambridge University in the summer of 1923, "was the one indispensable figure both to the winning of the war and to the building of a governmental structure on foundations so wise and strong as to convert the American nation from a hope and a dream into a positive and permanent reality."

¹ Colonel Edmund Pendleton, a delegate from Virginia to the Continental Congress.

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